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JESUS CHRIST

THE

GREAT GOD OUR SAVIOUR.

BEING A VIEW OF THE DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE RESPECTING THE DEITY OF THE SON AS CONNECTED WITH THE DEITY OF THE FATHER AND OF THE HOLY GHOST.

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PREFACE.

The defence and illustration of the doctrine of Scripture respecting the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and other kindred subjects, the substance of which is contained in the following pages, were occasioned by the publication of a pamphlet entitled, "The Doctrine of the Trinity founded neither on Scripture, nor on Reason and Common Sense; but on Tradition and the Infallible Church," &c. by the Reverend W. H. Drummond, D. D. one of the ministers of the congregation of Strand Street, Dublin. In consequence of the activity with which that pamphlet was pushed into circulation, together with its dangerous tendency, several Ministers of different denominations in this city, and among others, the author, deemed it to be their duty to endeavour to counteract it from the pulpit. The lectures which he delivered with that

view, so far from being intended for publication, were intended to supersede the necessity of publishing, as he was exceedingly anxious not to be interrupted in other duties which he felt to be of the highest importance. Circumstances, however, occurred, which it is unnecessary to specify, that seemed to render it imperative upon him to submit to the interruption, and to offer the substance of his examination of Dr. Drummond's work to the consideration of the public.

But, although the present work was occasioned by the publication of the pamphlet alluded to, it is not a mere answer to that pamphlet. The author has followed his own arrangement in laying before his readers the Scripture foundation of the doctrines which he proposes to defend—the grounds on which he himself believes them; and has introduced the arguments of Dr. Drummond as objections where they crossed his path. He has viewed the work of Dr. Drummond as the most modern, and one of the ablest expositions of Unitarian doctrine—as embodying, in a condensed form, every thing of importance that has been advanced in support of that doctrine, during the whole period of the existence of the Christian Church. He has not drawn a picture of Unitarianism in his own lan-

guage, and then criticised that picture; but he conceives that he has done ample justice to the system which he opposes, by giving it all the advantage of the talents of its most recent, and one, at least, of its most able advocates. Unitarianism is always, in the following pages, permitted to plead its own cause in the language of Dr. Drummond, in some instances aided by that of Dr. Bruce.

It is scarcely to be expected that much original matter on such a subject should now be elicited. The author does not publish for the applause of originality, but simply for the purpose of exposing old error in the new dress in which it chooses to present itself. If Unitarians complain of want of novelty in the investigation; the author has the same reason to complain of want of novelty in the work which he investigates. With most of Dr. Drummond's critiques on Scripture he is as familiar as with the texts which he criticises. It is only where a new objection is made, that a new answer can reasonably be expected. If Unitarians are satiated with the repetition of our texts; we can most truly say that we are equally so with the repetition of their objections.

Although, however, the author makes no boast of novelty; yet he has not fol-

lowed the method of conducting the investigation adopted by any writer with whom he is acquainted; and he is not without hope that some parts of the glorious subject of which he treats, have been set in a point of view in which some of his readers may not have been accustomed to regard them. He would willingly acknowledge every idea or argument which he has intentionally borrowed; but that the acknowledgment of one part would imply a claim to originality in the rest—a claim which he might not be prepared or disposed to establish. He cannot, however, but own his obligations to the discourses of the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw on the Socinian Controversy,—a work which he has used as a book of reference, to prevent his omitting any thing essential to the subject. In the concluding chapter, many of his readers may also recognize thoughts that they have met with in the excellent letters of the late Rev. Andrew Fuller, on the comparative moral tendency of the Calvinistic and Socinian systems.

Several subjects are introduced by Dr. Drummond into his publication, which seemed to be of no consequence to the argument, or foreign to the main points at issue, and which therefore the author has not admitted into the body of his

work. A few of these he will now take the liberty of noticing.

The title of the Pamphlet calls for animadversion. It is there asserted that the doctrine of the Trinity is founded on tradition and the 'infallible church.' To establish this fact, it was incumbent on Dr. Drummond to show that those against whom he reasoned, founded their belief or rested their cause upon tradition, or upon the authority of the church to which he alludes. It is surely soon enough to complain of the authority of tradition, or of the church, when an attempt is made to introduce that authority into the controversy. Does he say that it was a doctrine held by the Church of Rome before it was held by the reformers? So was the being of a God; so was the crucifixion of Christ. If every doctrine which the reformers retained on their separation from the Church of Rome were pronounced to be held *on the authority* of that church, the principle would take a wider sweep than Dr. Drummond seems to be aware of. Would he say that the doctrine originated with the Church of Rome, in the sense of its first being suggested by that church? He knows the contrary; and would contradict himself by such an assertion. He himself traces it to Irenæus

and Justin Martyr, and, from them, as he imagines, to Plato ;—an antiquity that places its origin, even according to his own admission, in a remoter age than the claims of the Church of Rome to infallibility.

Strange to tell, however, it is he, Dr. Drummond himself, who introduces the authority of tradition into the controversy. He gives, as one reason for rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, that it was unknown to the early Christians. This he states on the authority of Dr. Priestley, who labours to establish that point, in a history of what he calls the early corruptions of Christianity. The argument is not worthy of a moment's attention ; for, if the doctrine be in the Bible, it matters not who, after the apostles, believed or did not believe it. Dr. Priestley's hypothesis, for the establishment of which he wrote what he calls a history, (a kind of writing which, above all others, requires an unbiassed mind ; and which is always regarded as vitiated by the detection of a hypothesis in it), is altogether void of foundation. When the author sat down to the examination of Dr. Priestley's hypothesis, a single expression betrayed the fallacy of it. One of the Fathers mentions some doctrine held by the *Jews*, to which Dr. Priestley adds, " that is, *Jewish Christians.*" And accordingly his

history proceeds upon the principle of confounding Jews with the Jewish converts to Christianity. That principle, together with the application of the same system of criticism to the expressions of the primitive Christians, which is applied by Unitarians to the Scriptures themselves, accounts for nearly all the speciousness of Dr. Priestley's history of the progress of corruption in the church;—a work by which, as he exposed his learning to utter contempt, so the author ever must hold, notwithstanding Dr. Drummond's high eulogy on his love of truth, that he forfeited all just claim to the character of an honest man.

Nothing could have induced Doctor Drummond to ascribe the doctrine of the Trinity to the authority of the Church of Rome, and, for that purpose, to avail himself of the admission, as he terms it, of Mr. Maguire, but the temptation to expose it to obloquy among Protestants, and to excite a host of prejudices against it;—a sort of stratagem more adroit than candid. To convince him how very easy it is to get up an argument of this description, let the following quotation from the French Encyclopedie, which the author accidentally met with in turning over the leaves of a book unconnected with the Unitarian controversy,

suffice. 'The Unitarians have always 'been regarded as Christian divines who 'had only broken and torn off a few 'branches of the tree, but still held to 'the trunk. Whereas they ought to be 'looked upon as a sect of philosophers, 'who, that they might not give too rude 'a shock to the religion and opinions, true 'or false, which were then received, did 'not choose openly to avow pure Deism, 'and reject verbally and unequivocally, 'every sort of revelation; but who were 'continually doing, with respect to the 'Old and New Testament, what Epi-'curus did with respect to the gods,—ad-'mitting them *verbally*, but destroying 'them *really*. In fact, the Unitarians 'received only so much of the Scripture 'as they found conformable to the natu-'ral dictates of reason, and what might 'serve the purpose of propping up and 'confirming the system they had em-'braced. A man becomes a Protestant: 'soon finding out the inconsistency of the 'essential principles of Protestantism, he 'applies to Socinianism for a solution of 'his doubts and difficulties, and he be-'comes a Socinian. From Socinianism 'there is but a very slight shade, and a 'a single step to take,—and he takes it.' Doctor Drummond will readily discern how much might be made of such a descrip-

tion of Unitarianism, by persons at least as able and as neutral as Mr. Maguire. But such arguments *ad captandum* are utterly unworthy of a serious subject. The ascription of the epithet *Infallible* to the Church of Rome, by one who does not believe that church to be infallible, on the very title of a book treating of the person of the Deity, is an indication of a levity which is totally misplaced. If the subject deserves any attention, it at least deserves seriousness.

Another topic introduced into the pamphlet is the change that is reported to have taken place in the views of Doctor Isaac Watts previous to his death. The opinions of any individual respecting a doctrine of Scripture are so destitute of importance in ascertaining the truth, that the author had always, without examination, taken it for granted that some cloud might have intervened on the death bed of that eminent individual to obscure his views of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The sketch, however, which Dr. Drummond has given of the evidence on which the representation rests, has convinced him that the whole is a fabrication. —A mere opinion of Dr. Lardner, who was a zealous Unitarian—extracts of a prayer of Doctor Watts, with which the world is favoured by another Unitarian, without

one sentence written by the venerable person himself, are placed in opposition to the testimony of a whole life. Doctor Drummond says, "it is much to be lamented that Doctor Watts's papers were not preserved or published, that they might have shown how the light of Unitarian Christianity first dawned upon his soul." This is, indeed, much to be lamented, as it is scarcely to be doubted that these papers would have effectually proved that, in the modern sense of the word, he was no Unitarian. He is not even suspected of doubting the Deity of the Lord Jesus—the doctrine which report ascribes to him not being Unitarian, but Sabellian.

The extracts from his prayer, given by Lindsey, bear all the marks of forgery. They breathe the spirit, they convey the ideas, they urge the arguments, they speak the very language of Lindsey, Priestley, Belsham, and other Unitarian writers. The good old man is represented as entering into a regular argument with the Deity, to convince HIM, as it would seem, that it would be unreasonable in him to expect that any one should believe the doctrine of the Trinity; and among other topics, there is introduced this, that many men even of *learning and piety*, had lost themselves in mazes in attempting to explain

that doctrine !!! This is quite too gross. Doctor Drummond calls it a humble prayer; to the author it appears one of the most insolent speeches that any man ever conceived of as being addressed to the God of heaven. If Doctor Watts uttered such a prayer, he had fallen indeed.

On Doctor Drummond's treatment of the Synod of Ulster in his second edition, the author will make but one observation. He conceives that his brethren are exceedingly indebted to him for his animadversions. That Synod has very generally been spoken of as consisting chiefly of Arians, or other Unitarians. The contempt expressed by Dr. Drummond for all of its ministers, except about half a dozen, will tend to redeem their character in the eyes of the public, and to prove how greatly they have been misrepresented.

The reader is requested to observe, that, as in the following work, the first person has been used by the author in speaking of himself; the person designated by the words *our author*, and sometimes *the author*, is Doctor Drummond, as being the author of the work upon which the animadversions are usually made.

That the Lord may accompany with his blessing this feeble effort to vindicate his sacred Word from misapprehension, is the author's earnest prayer, and, for its usefulness, his only hope.

CHAP. I.

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF REASONING FROM SCRIPTURE.

IN entering upon the consideration of subjects so incomparably sublime as the manifestation of God to his creatures, and the constitution (to use an expression of our author) of the divine mind, it is of prime importance to determine the principles upon which we are to reason; and especially to clear our way, by getting rid, if possible, of all false principles of reasoning. This is the more necessary, as I find that the opposite conclusions at which different individuals have arrived in their researches into these subjects, have been occasioned chiefly by their having adopted different principles of investigation.

1. THE very first point that requires to be determined, is the authority that is to be attributed to the sacred Scriptures;—whether they are so entirely the dictation of God, as to exempt them from all error, even in the choice of language; or whether, as is alleged by some, they are a revelation from God only in so loose and general a sense, as to be compatible with their containing some degree of error, at least some mistakes in the use of words. In the following tractate, I reason upon the principle of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures—of the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture, as they originally stood in the

sacred canon, being the dictation of the Holy Ghost; leaving the original reading to be ascertained by the ordinary rules of evidence in such cases. Nor should I choose to reason with any man, respecting any doctrine of revelation, who should not proceed upon this principle. With one who denies the plenary inspiration of Scripture, I should reason as with a deist, for the purpose of establishing that point; but I should regard it as a waste of time to attempt to convince him of any truth on the authority of Scripture, when he does not, in fact, admit that authority.

2. The next point to be determined is the province of reason and common sense in this investigation.

Now I hold it to be one of the plainest dictates of reason, that, if the Scripture be really a revelation from God, its doctrines ought to be received implicitly. The first duty of reason is to ascertain whether the Scriptures be a revelation from God, given in words dictated by the Spirit of God. That point being ascertained in the affirmative, the next duty of reason is, to examine the Scripture for the purpose of ascertaining what is revealed, and of receiving it with the simplicity of a little child. We are but children in understanding, and when the Lord condescends to speak to us as to children, all that our reason has to do is to endeavour to understand what he says. To form previous notions as to what a revelation from God ought to be, to determine from any independent speculations or imaginations, what doctrines would be right, or proper, or reasonable, to be true, or to be revealed, is not the use, but the abuse of reason. The reason of man was given him to

contemplate the works and the word of God as they are; and not to determine what the works or the word of God ought to be. And an intimation of Scripture ought to be received like an ascertained fact in nature, without the least regard to what may appear to us to be reasonable, or fit, or philosophical, or scientific.

And this implicit reception of the intimations of Scripture, is the more urgently required in regard to doctrines purely of revelation. Our author says, that the Unitarian's creed is derived from a clear interpretation of the two great volumes of the Almighty, nature and revelation. But on the doctrines under consideration, namely the manifestation of God to his creatures, and the internal constitution of the divine mind, the book of nature says absolutely nothing. If the author imagine that it does, let him prove it; let him produce his evidences from any ascertained facts in the natural world, of the manner in which it is fit and right that the Deity should manifest himself to his creatures, and of the nature of the divine mind, and not amuse his readers with confident assertions about reason and sound philosophy.

When the modern system of philosophizing was introduced into Europe, and new and extraordinary facts were beginning to be developed by the mighty engine, the *novum organum* that was then brought into operation; many of the religionists of that day attempted to confront them with the language and the doctrines of Scripture. The new opinions respecting the form and relative station of the earth, were pronounced to be impious, contrary to the word of God, and the church of Rome proceeded against the philosophers as heretics and blasphemers. I doubt not that our author will unhesitatingly condemn the

attempts to place the word of God in opposition to the works of God; and will deprecate the introduction of theology to control the search after truth in the natural world. And yet he would introduce the philosophy of the natural world to control and modify the declarations of the Bible. He would say, that this and the other doctrine cannot be taught in the Bible, because it is contrary to the book of nature; just as the fanatics of the dark ages said that this and the other statement respecting natural objects cannot be true, because it contradicts the assertions of Scripture. I doubt not that nature and revelation will be found perfectly to harmonize, when they are both fully understood, but this persuasion ought never to influence us in our examination of either of these books of the Almighty. All that we have to do is to examine both with patient attention; and we may thus discover how they harmonize with one another; but to alter or modify either for the purpose of making them harmonize, is to reduce both to the level of our poor imaginations. The author says, that Unitarians cannot believe that any revelation from heaven contradicts reason and common sense. I believe that no revelation from heaven can contradict the reality of things, and that the spiritual world when it is known, will be found equally worthy of the great Creator with the material world. But whether the reality of things in either will commend itself to the reason of any, or every man, I have no means of knowing, except that the Scripture seems to indicate that its doctrines will appear foolishness to the natural man.

A very large proportion of the reasons given by the author of the pamphlet, for rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, as he expresses himself,

are unsound and worthless; because they are reasons for rejecting it whether it be revealed in Scripture or not. He says, he rejects it, because it is contradictory to reason, because it contradicts the simplicity of God, (which simplicity is the dictate of his own imagination, and no part of revelation,) because it is indefinable and incapable of explanation; because it presents a monstrous confused image to the mind. He rejects it on a principle of science, on a principle of affection and duty to the Father of mercies, because he could not love him with all his heart, if his love be divided among three persons: although he is required, on the pain of an anathema, to love the Son, and to honour him, even as he honours the Father. He rejects it on a principle of benevolence, because he wishes every one to believe the gospel, and he would remove a difficulty out of their way. This is precisely the principle of the Jesuit missionaries who endeavoured to remove from the gospel every thing that they found to be offensive to the heathen, and therefore boldly asserted, that Jesus was not crucified,—that the story of his crucifixion was a calumny of his enemies. He rejects it, because the most erroneous notions of providence, and infidelity itself had sprung from it, as if infidelity had never sprung from Unitarianism. He rejects it, because as he alleges on the authority of Dr. Priestly, it was unknown to the primitive Christians. This is an argument, which even if well founded, which it most unquestionably is not, comes very strangely from one who blames the orthodox for receiving their doctrine from the church of Rome. Were the early Christians infallible? He rejects it because, as he conceives, it degrades the Father and dishonours the Son, (that is, his

misconception of it does so:) and he receives the opposite doctrine, because it recommends itself by its simplicity, and needs no tedious ratiocination to explain or support it. Now all these arguments would be equally good reasons for rejecting a doctrine, whether it be revealed in Scripture or not, and if every one of them were well founded, they would not prove that it is not taught in Scripture. They are precisely such arguments as a man would use in opposition to any phenomenon in the material heavens, who, instead of looking to the heavens for the purpose of ascertaining the truth, should shut himself up in his closet and proceed to reason upon what ought to be in the heavens. They are entirely similar, many of them precisely the same, with the arguments which in a former age, were actually urged against the motion of the earth on its axis, and its revolutions round the sun. If arguments of this description be of any weight, they weigh against the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and accordingly this use has often been made of them: but they are plainly of no avail whatever, to prove what is or is not contained in the Scripture, which must be ascertained solely by a careful examination of the Bible itself, uninfluenced by any such considerations.

Even if human reason were capable, in an unclouded, uncorrupted state, to determine thus, by *a priori* argument, what ought, or ought not to be true respecting the Divine mind, and the manifestations of the Deity, and what ought, or ought not to be revealed on such subjects; in its present darkened, perverted condition it is utterly unqualified for any such speculations, and its wisdom is to receive as a mere babe the simple, unadulterated milk of the word of God. In this

view of the condition of human reason our author will, probably, not agree with me. And yet he incidentally gives views of the utter corruption of the human heart as strong as can well be conceived. He asks the question, why, if Unitarianism have so many claims to preference, being the religion of reason, common sense, and the Bible, it has not been more extensively diffused? And he answers, in the words of our Lord, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." What! notwithstanding all the beauty, and simplicity, and purity, and sublimity of this doctrine, is it almost universally rejected, and rejected because men love darkness rather than light, and is the reason of their thus loving darkness that their deeds are evil? What a deplorable conception must the author have of the moral condition of Christendom! But are the Unitarians better than the orthodox? No, in no wise. He tells us that the fathers of the three first centuries, and consequently all the ancient Christian people, for nearly 300 years, till the Council of Nice, were generally Unitarians. But that, in consequence of Arius being loaded with every species of abuse which an intolerant faction could invent, the bishops assembled at Nice, to the number of 318, besides a multitude of presbyters, deacons, and other ecclesiastical persons, who could not easily be counted, collected from all parts of the world, and who, up till this time, were generally Unitarians, many of whom had suffered torture with constancy under the heathen persecutions, not only renounced their Unitarianism, but agreed in issuing a declaration which they knew to be false, namely, that Trinitarianism had at all times been the doctrine of

the Christian church; nay, and encouraged the introduction of force and persecution to constrain men to renounce the very doctrine which, up till that time, they themselves had held; and further, that the laity followed the decrees of their clergy with so blind a submission, that Trinitarianism, a doctrine till then almost unknown, became the established doctrine of the church; and that Unitarians have ever since been frightened, by the clank of chains and the crackling of faggots, out of their sublime and beautiful doctrine. They who can believe all this cannot be expected to hesitate about any thing that will tend to support their system. But is it possible to conceive of a more degrading picture of the moral condition of both ancient and modern Unitarians? And truly, with these very low views of the moral condition of mankind, our author should not be too sanguine in his expectations from the powers of reason and common sense.

But the utter incapacity of the powers of the human mind for advancing one step farther than the mere ascertaining and arranging of facts, will be most effectually exposed by a cursory glance of the result of its speculations. What has human reason ever done for mankind beyond the observation of facts in nature and in revelation? What have its speculations been, but a succession of puerilities and absurdities? It was reason and common sense that discovered that the world was a vast plain supported on the back of an elephant, and that elephant supported on the back of an enormous crab. It was reason and common sense that, in the inanity of its speculations, fixed the earth in the centre of the universe, and wheeled the sun, and moon, and stars in a daily revolution round it; and which

then, to account for different phenomena, was forced to invent its crystal spheres, and its other clumsy expedients: (or, to avail myself of the author's appropriate quotation,)

> —to build, rebuild, contrive
> To save appearances, and gird the sphere,
> With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
> Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.

Reason has in one age filled the universe with solid spheres, in another, with vortexes of ether, and in a third it has discovered that there is nothing real in the universe but a succession of ideas, and that all its supposed revolutions exist merely in our own minds. In short, a survey of the inventions of reason and common sense even with regard to natural objects, which have each been fashionable in their day, presents an exhibition little superior to the drivellings of insanity.

And what have the speculations of reason done for religion? Has it not been this boasted faculty that crowded the universe with monstrous gods—monstrous in their forms, but infinitely more so in their mental characters? Was it not reason and common sense that converted the worship of the Creator into orgies of the most detestable pollution aud the most revolting cruelty? The reason even of Socrates taught him that every man should worship the gods according to the custom of his own country, however debased and absurd these practices might be; and led him to give directions that a cock should be sacrificed to Esculapius, a rite that might vie with the Greegrees of the Hottentots.

What has reason done for the religion of the Bible? The common sense and reason of the Sadducees taught them to reject the existence of angels, and spirits, and the resurrection. The

reason and common sense of the Gnostics, who were the rational, philosophical Christians of their day, taught them that the material world was created by an evil principle, and that the souls of men were shut up in material bodies contrary to the will of the supreme Deity; and all this for the purpose of accounting for the origin and existence of evil on the most philosophical and common sense principles. Common sense and reason are employed to support the tyranny of the Church of Rome: for when we refuse to receive her dictates, we are told that we are throwing away our reason; because it is obvious to reason that an infallible living tribunal is absolutely necessary in the world, which tribunal is to be found only in the Popes and Councils of the Romish Church. Common sense and reason have on the continent of Europe divested Christianity of all its peculiarities; have described our Lord as a benevolent enthusiast, who sacrificed his life to confirm doctrines which, if not true, he at least conceived would be useful; and have engaged Unitarian professors of theology in the enterprize of accounting for every thing recorded in the New Testament, such as the miracles of Jesus, and his resurrection and ascension, without the intervention of any supernatural power. Common sense and reason taught Dr. Geddes, who is quoted by our author as good authority in the interpretation of Scripture, that the sacred historians wrote, like other historians, from such documents as they could find, and consequently were liable to mistakes: that the commission given to the Israelites to drive out the Canaanites, being contrary to the goodness of God, is to be regarded as a mere fable; that Moses was an artful demagogue, who took advantage of some convulsion in nature to per-

suade the people that God was speaking to him; that the Israelites did not pass through the Red Sea, but round the head of it, because the removal of ten or twelve fathoms of water was utterly incredible; and that the pillar of cloud and of fire could be nothing more than some combustible matter carried before the people, perhaps a bunch of burning straw, to direct them in their march What the common sense and reason of our author may lead him to determine on any of these subjects I know not: but it is very probable that, however well he may satisfy himself as to what is reasonable, and fit, and beautiful, his notions will not satisfy, in all points, one other individual on the face of the globe; and that his views of what is fit, and reasonable, and beautiful, will, in a short time, be as much out of fashion as those of the Manichees or the Sadducees.

And is it to this boasted reason of man, which has been perpetually losing itself in intricacies of its own fabrication, that the standard of the word of God is to be squared and accommodated? Accommodated to what? To philosophy? To what philosophy? Is it to the philosophy of Confucius, or of Zoroaster, or of Pythagoras, or of Socrates, or of Plato, or of Aristotle, or of Manes the Persian, or of the Gnostics, or of Descartes, or of Malebranche, or of David Hume, or of our author himself? accommodated to a very Proteus, which has never kept the same shape for half a century—to an ever varying succession of the most preposterous and ludicrous contradictions?

Are we then to cast away our reason and common sense in regard to religion? Assuredly not. Reason and common sense have their own appropriate employment in this, as in all other departments of human knowledge; and all that

we plead for is, that reason and common sense may be confined in this, as they now are in all other inquiries after truth, to an investigation and arrangement of facts. The philosophy of Bacon and of Newton does not require men to cast away their reason, because it discountenances unsupported speculations. It merely confines reason and common sense to their own province. Reason is bound by it to receive facts as she finds them, and to reject whatever is not ascertained by actual observation. The most acute and subtile and beautiful speculation is not permitted to shake or to modify the minutest fact the truth of which has been attested by competent evidence. All the beauty and simplicity of the Newtonian system of astronomy, would not be permitted to shake the credit of the most apparently trivial, but well attested fact, that might seem to be inconsistent with it. And it has been by thus directing reason, and confining it to its proper business, that modern philosophy has accomplished all its wonders.

Now we desire nothing more than that reason and common sense should be restricted by the same rules in regard to religion, as those to which the modern principles of philosophizing have subjected her in every other inquiry after truth. In other departments of knowledge, these reasons of the author for rejecting Trinitarianism, which I have enumerated, such as its being contradictory to reason, or contradictory to any other doctrine, its being incapable of explanation, its presenting a monstrous picture to the mind, his reasons from piety and benevolence, and from the beauty and simplicity of the opposite opinion, would not have the weight of a feather. A man who should attempt to bring such arguments nto astronomy or chemistry

would be laughed at, and he would be told that he must establish his facts and opinions, or rebut the facts alleged by others, by a very different strain of investigation. Now all that we desire, is that such arguments should be held in as little esteem in religion, as in any other science—that the phenomena of the Bible should be treated with as much respect as the phenomena of nature, and that no *a priori* argument, should be permitted to alter or to modify any intimation of the word of God. If the speculations of reason are not permitted to alter or modify facts discovered in the natural world, how much less should such speculations be permitted to alter or to modify facts revealed from the spiritual world, with which we are so much less conversant? The Scripture is spread before us like the face of the sky, to contemplate, but not to accommodate to our own notions of fitness and propriety: and he who would have us to listen to representations of what is fit, or reasonable, or simple, or beautiful, in pleading for the modification of a single sentence of the word of God, is labouring to prolong and to extend the reign of the dark ages in theology.

Our thus confining ourselves to a simple investigation of the word of God does not imply that every expression is to be understood literally. Figurative language is, doubtless, employed in Scripture, as it is in every human composition, and allowance must be made for it. We have to seek, with simplicity and honesty, what is the mind of the Spirit in the language of Scripture; and here we must be guided by the practice of the sacred writers themselves. But that is a very different operation from the bringing in of speculations drawn from other sources to determine whether an

expression is to be understood literally or figuratively.

Besides, we must, I think, concede something like common sense principles to the construction of the Bible,—to suppose at least that the writers of Scripture were not permitted to use language so extravagantly figurative as to outrage all common sense. There are some writers who seem to be so much impressed with the tendency of orientals to allegory and metaphor, as to imagine that they are incapable of expressing themselves literally on any occasion. I confess I have never heard or seen any such figurative language introduced into plain, simple narrative, as some critics conceive to be introduced into the Mosaic history and the Gospels. When a critic attempts to prove that the narrative of our Lord's ascension to heaven is given in eastern hyperbole and allegory; and that the facts, simply told, might be, that Jesus went up to the top of the Mount of Olives with his disciples, that a mist falling upon them he left them unseen by them, and went to Damascus, where he afterwards met Paul, and had the dexterity to persuade him to join his party; he seems to me to suppose that the writer of the narrative was bereft of his reason. And so when our author imagines that one inspired writer could address Solomon in such words as these, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" that another could apply such epithets to Hezekiah as, "The Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of the future age;" and that a third could call Jesus Christ, "The blood of God," as being his son, because men sometimes call their kindred their own flesh and blood; while yet Jesus is supposed not to be his son as being one in nature with him, but merely in a figurative sense, as

his people are sometimes called his children; he seems to me to deny to the writers of the Bible any share of common sense, that he may establish his own.

My readers will find, therefore, that I shall have continual occasion to appeal to their reason and common sense; not for the purpose of determining what the inspired writers ought to have taught,—what it would have been fit, and right, and simple, and rational for them to teach, but what they actually have taught, what is the meaning of their language.

We are told, indeed, that we sacrifice reason and common sense when we believe that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh. Our answer is, that if the doctrine be taught in Scripture, we make the best and highest use of our reason in discovering it there, and believing it on the testimony of God. We are told that, according to our own admission, we *prostrate* our reason and common sense. I answer, that we use the word prostrate, not in the medical sense of reducing it to imbecility, as when a physician speaks of the *prostration* of strength in a patient; but in the religious sense of subjecting it to the teaching of God, *prostrating* it in adoration of his infinite wisdom, and in implicit submission to his training and tuition. An unlettered peasant who submits to be taught to read, that he may peruse, and endeavour to understand the sacred oracles, does not prostrate his reason in the sense of weakening it, but by subjecting it to the teaching of Scripture he strengthens and invigorates it; although he does not speculate upon what would be beautiful, and simple, and fit, and benevolent in a system of revealed truth. And what is true of a peasant, is equally true of a philosopher. He does not throw away his

reason when he qualifies himself for reading the Scriptures in their original languages, and when he compares Scripture with Scripture, for the purpose of discovering what is the mind of the Spirit in every sentence of the sacred volume; although he does not presume to sit in judgment on the Scripture, and, from his views of the natural world, infer what would be fit and proper for God to reveal from the spiritual world, or what it would be pious and benevolent in him to believe; but, like the peasant, he exercises and invigorates his reason by subjecting it to the training and discipline of Scripture—he elevates and ennobles it by *prostrating* it before the authority of HIM who condescends to become its instructor. "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world; let him become a fool, that he may be wise."* "Whosoever" (be he peasant or philosopher) "shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."†

One great cause of the diversity of sentiment that prevails in regard to the contents of the Bible, when compared with the astonishing harmony of sentiment that exists on almost every other subject of human knowledge, seems to be, that theologians have persevered in a system of inquiry into revealed truth which has long been banished from inquiries into external nature. They have not sat down to the study of the Bible for the mere purpose of ascertaining what it contains, as philosophers have sat down to the study of nature for the mere purpose of eliciting facts. Like the ancient philosophers, they have persevered in forming systems by mixing up the more obvious phenomena of

* 1 Cor. iii. 18. † Mark x. 15.

Scripture with their own imaginations. So long as this system of philosophizing was practised, there was as much diversity of opinion on all other subjects as on religion. The learned world was distributed under different schools of philosophy, each distinguished by its own peculiar tenets. Diversities of philosophical sects are now unknown, except in reference to some subjects on which so little has been actually ascertained, that men are led to substitute imagination for fact. The cause of this singular revolution obviously is the change that has been introduced into the mode of prosecuting philosophical inquiries. Had the old system of philosophizing continued, the same, or similar divisions must have continued also. But philosophers are now confined to an examination and arrangement of facts. They have now a fixed, immoveable standard, to which their judgments must be conformed—the actual phenomena of nature; which necessarily brings them into agreement with one another. Let the same system be introduced into religious inquiries,—let theologians be confined to a simple study of the Bible, for the purpose of ascertaining merely what it contains,—first, what are the original words of inspiration; secondly, what is the sense intended to be conveyed by these words: let attempts to forestall the interpretation of Scripture, and to bias the judgment in its search, by speculations upon what is to be expected in it—what common sense and reason would approve of, and we may soon expect as much unanimity of opinion upon that as upon any other subject of inquiry. Many may continue to reject the Scripture, but so great a mass of evidence would be accumulated in support of the system of truth revealed, that no one would venture to cast a doubt upon what

the Bible actually teaches. So long as men seek to conform the Scripture to their own notions of what is fit, and beautiful, and rational, they must be divided: for these notions are different in every different individual. But the Scripture is one thing, one system of truth, and the more we know of it, the more we shall be agreed, and the more we shall discover in it a beauty, and simplicity, and fitness, and sublimity, infinitely transcending our loftiest imaginations.

3. There is another false principle of reasoning from Scripture, of which abundant use is made in reference to our subject, intimately connected with that misdirection of common sense and reason upon which we have been animadverting, namely, the placing texts of Scripture in opposition to one another, and then pleading that the one neutralizes the other, so that no argument can be founded on either. This practice our author avows. The Rev. Mr. Maguire had said in his discussion with Mr. Pope, manifestly for the purpose of providing an argument in favour of the Church of Rome, that the "Socinian's objections are solid and stubborn, that he has reason and common sense on his side, that he will quote text against text, enjoying the latitude of private judgment, till not a single shred of argument remains." To this our author adds, "In these sentiments of Mr. Maguire Unitarians most cordially concur."* And accordingly he proceeds freely with this practice, and when a text is presented to him which he cannot explain on his own principles, he finds what he conceives to be a contradictory text, and then pleads that nothing can be concluded from it. If, for example, a passage is adduced in which Jesus is expressly called God, he confronts the declaration

* Page 1.

by showing that he is called man; if one text ascribes to him omnipotence, he brings another which represents him as weary with a journey, as a contradiction of it: if one text intimates that there are more persons than one in the Godhead, he finds another which declares that there is but one God.

Now, I ask, is this a respectful treatment of the word of God? Is the Scripture to be represented, by one who professes to approach it in the character of a disciple, as a mass of irreconcileable contradictions, one part of which must be revoked to make way for the other? Is not this to represent it as teaching nothing determinately, as being, what some Roman Catholic divines have asserted it to be, a mere "nose of wax," which may be moulded into any form? Will Unitarians heartily acquiesce in this view of it, which, doubtless, was that which Mr. Maguire intended to give of it?

I ask again if this principle would be tolerated in any philosophical investigation? A fact is discovered, and announced, and established on sufficient evidence. Some person, however, instead of examining the phenomenon, or the evidence on which it is announced, brings forward some other fact which he conceives to be inconsistent with it. Would he be listened to? Surely not. He would be told that he must believe both facts if they be established on sufficient evidence. Our author's method was precisely that by which the Copernican system of astronomy was resisted. Facts apparently contradictory to it were brought forward in abundance, and, on the credit of these, the evidences of it were treated with contempt. All the supposed absurdities of the earth moving with so much rapidity as that system represents were brought in array against it:—

> Ergo, tam celeri tellus si concita motu
> Iret in occasum, &c.
> Ipsæ etiam volucres tranantes aera leni,
> Remigio alarum, celeri vertigine terræ,
> Abreptas gemerent sylvas, nidosque tenella
> Cum sobole et chara forsan cum conjuge, &c.
>
> BUCHANAN DE SPHÆRA.

But arguments such as these have long been banished from that, and every other science; and the ability of men to reconcile phenomena is no longer regarded as in any degree the standard of truth. And why is the book of revelation to be treated with less reverence than the book of nature? If there be statements in Scripture that seem to contradict one another, we may, doubtless, use all legitimate means for ascertaining whether any alteration has crept into the text, and to ascertain the principle on which the apparent contradictions are to be reconciled. But, if we do not succeed in this, we must not permit the one declaration to obliterate the other. Mahommedan doctors finding irreconcileable contradictions in the Koran, are forced to suppose that in such cases the former declaration is revoked by the latter. But we can admit no such principle in the interpretation of Scripture. Having ascertained the real state of the apparently contradictory texts and the obvious meaning of them, we must receive them both, whether we can reconcile them or not. If, for example, the Scripture distinctly assert that the Word was God, and that the Word was with God, I must believe both of these propositions, whether I can reconcile them to my satisfaction or not. I must believe that they are capable of being reconciled without destroying the sense of either, and that my inability to reconcile them arises not from any real contradiction in them, but

from my own ignorance. If the Scripture declare that there is but one God, I must believe the declaration. If it declare that one who is called the Son is God, and distinguished from the Father, who is also declared to be God, I must believe that God is in some respect one, and in some respect two. If, besides the Father and the Son, it reveal another person, whom it calls the Holy Ghost, as God, I must believe that God is in some respect one, and in some respect three. But this appears to me irreconcileable. Be it so: my ability to reconcile such declarations is not the standard of truth. There are some critics who when they find a Hebrew or Greek sentence which they cannot translate, immediately pronounce it to be unintelligible, and then propose some alteration in the text, to bring it within the limits of their knowledge of these languages. But this is an arrogance that cannot be too strongly condemned. And just so deserving of condemnation is the presumption of those who would bring down Scripture to the level of their ability to explain it; and who, when they cannot reconcile its different declarations, proceed with unhallowed temerity, to alter the obvious sense of its language.

Another modification of this principle is, to deprive texts of Scripture of all meaning, for the purpose of evading their evidence. A notable example of this practice we have in our author's critique on John i. 1, on which I shall have occasion to animadvert in the sequel. A second instance we have in his critique on Heb. i. 10, in which he attempts to throw a doubt on that passage being part of the address to the Son which commences at verse 8th, although, to a person of common understanding, nothing can be more obvious. He says that the

connexion of the passage with the preceding verses is not clear, that the author's style is very elliptical, often abstruse, and that it is by no means easy to trace in it an uninterrupted train of thought. Now admitting that there are obscure passages in the writings of Paul, who ever thought of bringing an obscure passage in the writings of any author, as evidence, that plain and simple passages, the meaning of which is obvious on a moment's inspection, must be obscure also? The whole passage in which the author finds so much difficulty, stands thus, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy "throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre "of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom, "thou hast loved righteousness, and hated "iniquity; therefore God, thy God hath anointed "thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. "And, thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid "the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are "the works of thy hands," &c.—Now this passage must be obscure indeed, to one who is determined not to see that the latter part commencing with, "Thou Lord," is quoted as addressed to the Son, as well as the former part; but to any one who is disposed to receive the Scripture as he finds it, nothing can be more simple or obvious.

Our author insinuates, that our doctrine is built on ambiguous mysterious passages, from which it requires much ingenuity to elicit the sense which we ascribe to them—the meaning of which can be extracted only by adepts in occult theology. For the validity of this assertion, I must appeal to those who shall read the subsequent part of this tractate. The truth I believe, they will find to be, that we build nothing whatever on any passage, which is either of doubtful reading, or of doubtful mean-

ing. They will find indeed, that the author frequently labours, to prove that texts are obscure, which are as clear as if written with a sun beam; and that texts are ambiguous, which are so precise in their language, that the utmost ingenuity of criticism, has failed to elicit any other meaning out of them, than that which we attribute to them. He will find one passage, which has had five different meanings forced upon it, by Unitarian writers, all of which our author rejects, and proposes, without a vestige of authority, an alteration in the words, and which even then, will not bear the meaning that he would draw from it. For my part, I should never dream of laying much weight on any signification of a text, but that which is most obvious,—that which would be given to it by persons altogether ignorant of the controversy. In fact, there are few, or no instances, of Unitarian critics even attempting to prove that a text will not bear the meaning in which we understand it, or even, that that meaning is not the most obvious. The utmost effort of such writers usually is, to show that the text is capable of bearing another meaning besides its plain and obvious one, and that too, not unfrequently, a meaning which no one ever thought of, till the modern agitation of the controversy. They thus force us to appeal to the grammar of the original languages, and to the practice of Greek and Hebrew writers, for the purpose of rebutting their far-fetched whimsical interpretations, and then they complain that our doctrine is founded on the niceties of Greek particles, and the forms of Hebrew phraseology. No! our doctrine is founded on the obvious signification of the words, and it is they who betake themselves to the minutiæ of criticism. But

surely an avowed attempt to prove that a passage is ambiguous which has one plain meaning—an attempt for example to discover another meaning in such words as these, "The Word was with God, and the Word was God," than that which they obviously bear, by comparing them with passages in no way connected with them, passages treating of totally different subjects, is to say the least of it a very extraordinary procedure. For the truth of these representations, I must again refer the reader to the following pages.

The author asks, on our insisting on the plain obvious interpretation of Scripture, why then do ye not believe in the doctrine of Transubstantiation? I answer, because there is not a sentence in the whole Bible, that gives the slightest countenance to such a doctrine. Jesus does not say, this bread is, or will be, transubstantiated or changed into my body; but simply, this is my body, after which he calls the bread still bread. To suppose that Jesus changed the bread into his body, by saying, this is my body, is to suppose that he spoke falsely, by saying in reference to the bread, this is my body, when it was not, but only became so, after he had used these words. The words therefore must be understood figuratively. Further I reject the doctrine, because in speaking of the same subject, the eating of his flesh, our Lord himself explains his words figuratively, expressly declaring that the flesh profiteth nothing. And still further, I reject the literal interpretation, because the figure is frequently used by our Saviour, as when he says, "I am the door," "I am the true vine," and because it is common in all languages, as when we say in looking on a map, this is England, this is France, this is Dublin,

&c. Our Lord was when he used the words, instituting an ordinance, which contained a representation of his death, and when he said this is my body, and this is my blood, he most obviously meant, in this representation the bread stands for my body, and the wine for my blood; just as in explaining the parable of the tares, he said, the field is the world, the seed is the word, the reapers are the angels. Let our author give such reasons as these for his figurative interpretations, and no one will resist him, who dares to use his own judgment; but let him not compare with these reasons, the critical subtleties by which he would make out a bare possibility, that passages which are luminous as the sun, may perhaps bear another construction.

But the most daring example, of opposing Scripture to Scripture, I have yet to notice; namely, placing the *credibility* of one passage in opposition to that of another.

"The omniscience of our Lord," says our author, "is inferred from a passage in Jeremiah, and another in the Apocalypse. But we have already heard Christ himself declaring, that he knew not when the day of judgment would arrive; and we would deem his own declaration *worthy of more credit* than Jeremiah's, or John's, *even though they had explicitly affirmed what he denies.*"*

"Worthy of more credit than Jeremiah's or John's!" Does our author really believe that Jeremiah and John "spake as they were moved

* Page 30 first edition. I cannot find this passage in the second edition. Probably it has been withdrawn in consequence of the animadversions which have been made upon it. The Unitarian congregations in this country, are not yet prepared for such "*liberality*;" and will require some further intercourse with the Unitarians of England, and of the Continent of Europe, before they will be able to bear such strong meat, as that one part of Scripture may flatly contradict another, and thereby destroy its credibility.

by the Holy Ghost?" According to our author's own doctrine Jesus himself was only an inspired creature; and would he bring the words of the Spirit of God by the lips of Jesus, to impeach the credibility of the words of the same Spirit of God by the lips of any other of his servants? In his haste, indeed, he totally overlooks the fact that the words quoted from the book of Revelation are the words of Jesus himself, as well as those quoted from the evangelist, Mark. The sole difference is, that the one declaration of Jesus is recorded by Mark, the other by John. And would he employ the words of the blessed Jesus to confront himself? Would he attempt to condemn him out of his own mouth? The English public have been long inured to such sentiments from Unitarian writers; and may not be so much shocked with a passage of this description as I am sure the Irish public must be. But the manifest tendency of an insinuation, that one part of Scripture is more worthy of credit than another, is to produce infidelity: nor can I conceive how a man who really believes that the whole Scripture is given by inspiration of God, should even venture to hint that any part of it could, in any degree, be undeserving of credit, or that one testimony in it could, by any possibility, contradict another. To weigh the credibility of Jesus against that of his apostles, or the credibility of one inspired writer against that of another, and yet profess to receive the whole Scripture as the word of God, is an inconsistency peculiar, I believe, to modern Unitarians.

4. Another false principle of reasoning, which might seem scarcely deserving of notice were it not for the abundant use that is made of it, is that of misstating and distorting the doctrine that is opposed. A man who is really and seriously

searching after truth will be exceedingly on his guard against this practice; because he will feel that it exposes him to the mortification of losing his labour, by confuting a doctrine which no one contends for. He will, therefore, endeavour distinctly to understand the doctrine which he proposes to examine, he will take his view of it from the most able and judicious of those who have defended it, he will be anxious to see it in the most favourable light in which it can be placed, lest he should spend his time and his strength in professedly opposing what, after all, may be the truth, or at best in reasoning against a mere misapprehension of the doctrine that he would explode. A prejudice may be excited or strengthened, or a triumph gained, among those who read only one side of the question, by the refutation of an absurdity which no one maintains; but such a refutation can never convince one who holds the doctrine, because he finds that the arguments do not bear upon his opinions.

I should be glad that I could acquit our author of the extreme weakness of arguing against mere misconceptions of the doctrines which he proposes to impugn. I willingly exculpate him of intentional misrepresentation. No doubt he imagines that we hold the doctrines which he imputes to us, for he cannot but be above the puerility of seeking a momentary triumph among the ignorant and the prejudiced by reasoning against absurdities of his own invention. But he has, at least, been extremely negligent in making himself acquainted with what our sentiments really are. Instead of looking into authentic documents, he seems to have formed his conceptions of our doctrine from reports not superior to those which represented the primitive Christians as cannibals.

For example, he argues perpetually as if, by believing in the Divine nature of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, we believed that there were three Gods; and therefore he keeps in constant array, as if against us, those texts which declare the unity of the Godhead: whereas if he had taken the trouble to examine authentic documents of churches that believe that there are three persons in the Godhead, or the writings of persons who are held in any esteem by us, he would have found that the unity of God is always insisted upon as the very foundation of all religion. The learned author is, indeed, not so ignorant of this as from the first edition of his work we might have imagined; for in his preface to the second edition of it he says, that we affirm that we believe in the divine unity as well as Unitarians, and expresses his satisfaction that we do so, even if it be of envy and strife: but he adds, "Let not the disciples of Athanasius, Calvin, and the Pope be under any apprehension that we shall identify their three persons with our one God. Our unity has no resemblance to theirs. Ours is a monad—theirs is a triad. Ours is a mathematical point—theirs is a triangle." And in another passage he says that "God is a spirit, simple, uncompounded, indivisible." Now, to all this we have no objection. We have no desire to have fellowship with him in believing in a unity that may be compared to a monad or mathematical point, or in the existence of such a God as he describes—a spirit, simple, uncompounded, indivisible, because we do not find any such language used in Scripture in describing the nature of the Deity. We do not indeed compare our God to a triangle, as he does his to a monad or a mathematical point; but we believe that there is one God, and but one, simply because

the Scriptures say so; and we believe that the Father is God, and that the Son is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God, for the same reason, the Scriptures say so. When, therefore, he designates one of those ministers who saw it to be his duty to animadvert on his pamphlet from the pulpit, "An active and persevering enemy of the great Bible truth, that God is one," he can mean only that he opposes the doctrine of a unity in the Godhead that may fitly be compared to a monad or a mathematical point, and to this view of his sentiments I am sure that minister can have no objection. Whether we be followers of Athanasius, and Calvin, and the Pope, or followers of the Bible; and whether our author be a follower of the Bible, or a disciple of Priestley, Belsham, Wakefield, Taylor, Whitby, &c. the reader may be able to form some judgment from the following pages. If he find me quoting the authority of Athanasius, or Calvin, or the Pope in opposition to the Scriptures, I shall not deny the master whom I thus follow; and if he find our author quoting the authority of any of these critics, appealing to their learning, their candour, and their acuteness, as his authority for departing from the obvious meaning of any passage of Scripture, or for altering the words of Scripture, he will be able to determine what master the author serves.

Again, our author gives a most erroneous and distorted statement of our sentiments respecting the origin of the Gospel.

"Trinitarianism," says he, "represents the Father and Son as actuated by different principles, and on the most important of all subjects, moral virtue—the one as rigorous and inflexibly just, the other as merciful and compassionate. Here their unity is abolished. An act of disobedience is committed by

the first of God's intelligent creatures placed upon this earth; and 'he who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust,' filled with ineffable fury, sentences man, and, in him, all his innocent and unconscious posterity to everlasting perdition. Thus had man been irrecoverably lost—but God the Son interferes, and since nothing less than a ransom of infinite price should atone for the smallest offence against an infinite Being, he offers to pay the price required, to assume a human form and die the death of the cross, that the curse may be annulled.

"Accordingly the proposal is accepted, and the Father Almighty suffers his Son, who is equal to himself, ** to be born, ** to be nailed to a cross as a malefactor, ** the sacrifice of a son to a father, ** to the inexorable wrath of an offended Deity.

"Now it is evident from this scheme that God the Father and God the Son entertained totally contradictory views of man's first offence. Though consubstantial, they are dissentient; for, if they be of one mind, why did not the Son join in the curse, and demand aninfinite ransom as well as the Father?" Page 6.

"Unitarianism will not listen for a moment to the common errors by which this bright attribute (viz. mercy) is obscured. It will not hear of a vindictive wrath in God which must be quenched by blood; or of a justice which binds his mercy in an iron chain, until its demands are satisfied to the full. It will not hear that God needs any foreign influence to awaken his mercy." Page 55.

It is quite amusing to observe the seriousness and simplicity with which the Rev. author draws his inference, "Now it is evident from this scheme," &c. as if any one had ever entertained so preposterous and absurd a scheme. Where did he find it? Can he point out any person who has avowed such a scheme? I hope he will believe me, when I assure him I never heard of it or met with it, except in the writings of

Unitarians. He, I observe, takes it from Channing, and Channing either invented it or got it from some other Unitarian. But is it a dictate of common sense to take his account of the doctrine which he wishes to explode, not from those who believe it, but from those who oppose it? How would he treat me, if to obtain a knowledge of his sentiments I should go, not to his own work nor to that of any Unitarian, but to some Calvinist's representation of them? The consequence is that all he says respecting this scheme is dissipated in the air; for I will venture to assert that there is not in the empire a person above the intelligence of a school boy who entertains any such monstrous fiction, or who feels himself affected by his argument.

We do not believe that the Father is more rigorous or inflexibly just than the Son. We do not believe that the Father was filled with ineffable fury or inexorable wrath against sinful men, and needed to be appeased by the sacrifice of his own Son, or by any "foreign influence." How is it possible that we could entertain such views of the Father, when we have such texts as these before us, which we never attempt to divert from their obvious meaning? "*God so loved the world* that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* "In this was manifest the LOVE of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." "Herein is LOVE, not that we loved God, but that he *loved* us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."† It is

* John iii. 16. † 1 John iv. 9, 10, 14.

an essential part of our tenets that the whole plan of redemption was formed in the eternal counsels of God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe, therefore, that the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ proceeded, not from the immitigable wrath, but from the incomprehensible love of the Father; that the Lord provided for himself a lamb for a burnt-offering; that "God commendeth his LOVE toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."*

I do not, indeed, pretend to explain with accuracy wherein lay the necessity for such a sacrifice as the Scripture declares the God of grace and compassion to have made, when he gave up his Son to be "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities," and "to bear our sins on his own body on the tree." Some, I confess, have gone farther in their attempts to explain that subject than I can accompany them. But I can conceive of such a necessity without adopting the horrible hypothesis which our author ascribes to us. I can conceive of the urgent claims of justice upon the Sovereign of the universe, the danger of permitting a violation of the law of the universe—that eternal standard of right and wrong, to pass without the condign punishment of the offenders, or some plan adopted to prevent their pardon from being interpreted into a relaxation of that law. I can conceive that while God acted on the benignity of his nature in pardoning sin, he might see it to be necessary to remove all hope of pardon from those who should be disposed to take encouragement from his mercy to tamper with the sacredness of his law. I can conceive that it might be wrong to pardon a criminal

* Rom. v. 8.

without such a security to the law; and therefore, morally speaking, God could not do it, because he cannot do wrong. We have heard of most humane princes placed in circumstances that compelled them to sign the death-warrants of criminals, although they have done so with tears flowing down their cheeks, not because they wanted either compassion or power to pardon them, but because they felt that it would be wrong to pardon them. And I can conceive of a similar moral necessity occurring in the administration of the empire of the universe, that urgently required either the condign punishment of the criminals, or some measure that would maintain the authority of the universal law. I do not urge these views dogmatically, but finding an atoning sacrifice clearly revealed in the word of God, and being asked what necessity there was for it, and being charged with representing the Deity as an inexorable tyrant, I reply, that without pretending to unfold all the mysteries of the divine government, we can easily conceive of a moral necessity for such a sacrifice, and of circumstances which would render such sacrifice a manifestation of the most sublime, the most unfathomable love.

I would not, however, be understood to offer this as a mere hypothesis which derives no countenance from the word of God. For, although God has not seen fit to explain to us fully and systematically the reasons of his procedure, he has given indications of them that are sufficiently intelligible. When, for example, we find him in one passage of Scripture declaring, that he that justifieth the wicked is an abomination to him,*

* Prov. xvii. 15.

and afterwards representing himself as justifying the ungodly,* and declaring that he set forth Christ Jesus to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, that his righteousness might be declared, and that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus;† the whole seems clearly to indicate, that the sacrifice of Jesus was made for the purpose of furnishing such a vindication of the Divine government—such a security to the divine law, as I have described:—that the whole scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ was a plan by which mercy and truth might meet together, and righteousness and peace might kiss each other.‡ Indeed the purposes for which our blessed Lord is declared to have suffered, sufficiently indicate the necessity that existed for his sufferings if we should be pardoned. For if he suffered, that with his stripes we might be healed,‖ that he might bear our sins on his body on the tree,§ that we might be reconciled to God, that through his blood we might have redemption and forgiveness of sins,¶ then it seems very manifest that his sufferings were necessary to our obtaining these mercies.

Let it however be remembered, that the fact of Christ's having suffered as an atoning sacrifice for sin, does by no means rest on our conceptions of the necessity of such a sacrifice. That fact rests on the direct, explicit, repeated declarations of Scripture; and, although the Scripture had not given even the most obscure hint of the necessity that called for such a sacrifice,—although we could form no conception of any purposes to be effected by it in the divine government; still the testimony of Scripture that Jesus suffered

* Rom. iv. 5. † Rom. iii. 25, 26. ‡ Psalm lxxxv. 10.
‖ Isa. liii. 5. § 1 Peter ii. 24. ¶ Col. i, 14.

as a sacrifice for sin, would bind us by the strongest obligations to believe that truth, and to rest upon it for salvation.

Nearly akin to the sophistry of arguing against a misrepresentation of an opponent's sentiments, is that of collecting all the absurd and foolish things that weak or presumptuous men may have said in their attempts to defend any doctrine, and founding upon these nugacities arguments against the doctrine itself. We do not deny that men have spoken weakly and presumptuously on this subject. They have been urged to give explanations which the Scripture does not give; they have fallen into the snare that was laid for them, and of course such attempts at explanation could not be otherwise than absurd. But their presumption can never affect the truth of the word of God. It may be said that when the advocates of a doctrine are driven to absurdities in their attempts to explain it, they betray the absurdity of the doctrine itself. If there be any weight in this argument it can at least be abundantly retorted. Unitarians have been driven to as many contradictions and absurdities as ever their opponents have been. Look at the ancient Unitarians—the Cerinthians, the Ebionites, and the Gnostics with all their endless dreams and fooleries. Look at the modern Unitarians, some believing that Jesus was himself only a created being, and yet that he created all things,—contrary as our author tells us, to clear express declarations of Scripture, that Jehovah made all things, and stretched forth the heavens alone;—others believing that he was the God revealed to the Jews, the author of all the wonders recorded in the Old Testament, who was worshipped and obeyed under the name Jehovah, and yet that he

was not the supreme God:—others believing that he was a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, and yet that he ought to be worshipped as God—a doctrine which the learned author himself pronounces to be absurd. I have always regarded the practice of the Italian painters in representing the Trinity by the figure of a triangle, as one of the most profane and offensive absurdities into which the weakest and most ignorant abettors of the doctrine have been betrayed; and yet our author himself has given us the counterpart of this practice, by comparing the unity of God to a monad or a mathematical point. But the truth is, that we trifle with a serious subject when we permit the absurdities into which men may have fallen, to influence our judgment in searching the Scriptures. The Scripture stands forth and speaks for itself. It rejects the assistance of such expositors; and all that we have to do is, with an humble and teachable spirit, to listen to its own words, and to pray for the grace of God to enable us to understand them.

5. Still another false principle of reasoning adopted by our author is to draw inferences from what he would have expected to be in Scripture, or in some particular part of it against what is clearly contained in Scripture—to argue that if a doctrine be true, it would have been declared in some particular form, and in some particular part of the Bible.

"Had such a doctrine as the Trinity," says he, "constituted any part of the Christian religion, we must believe, on every principle of reason and common sense, that it would have been revealed as clearly, and as much to the satisfaction of every inquirer, as the being of God himself. It would

have formed the leading and most prominent article of revealed religion, run parallel to the first commandment, and told us that, besides the great Jehovah, whom the Israelites believed to be one being or person, two other persons were to be admitted into the Godhead, equally claiming our adoration, and that it would be a leprosy and a soul-destroying heresy to deny it."* And again: "If divine worship were to be offered to Christ, is it not marvellous that we are not told so expressly, and in terms about whose meaning there can be no dispute?—Another divinity beside God being proposed by revelation as an object of worship, it is inconceivable on any principle of common sense, why it is not enjoined in terms at least equally clear as those which enjoin prayer to God supreme."† Again: "If Christ was really God, it is inconceivable why he did not avow it distinctly, and that it was not distinctly taught by the apostles. Strange that his own family and disciples never once suspected him to be the God of Israel!"‡

The reader will observe, that besides the particular purpose for which I have now cited these words, they call for animadversion in several other points of view. He speaks of language, the meaning of which could not be disputed, which I believe could not be human language: for Unitarians have proved to us, that there is no language so precise as to save it from dispute. He interlards with his argument a misrepresentation of our views, asserting that if the author of the Bible had intended to reveal two Gods he would have done so. But our present object is to animadvert on his principle, that if a doctrine is not repeated as frequently as we choose to demand, if it be not contained in some part of Scripture where, if it is to be re-

* Page 9. † Page 51. ‡ Page 10.

vealed at all, we insist on finding it, we are warranted to neglect or reject such revelation of it as God may have been pleased to give.

Now upon what ground does our author determine how the supreme Being must reveal any doctrine if he reveal it at all—what prominence he must give to it, in what language he must express it, or in what part of his revelation it must be found? On what ground does he determine that God shall not reveal a doctrine gradually, as the world may be able to bear it? Our Lord when he was about to leave the world told his disciples that he had yet many things to say to them, but that he could not then, because they were not able to bear them, and referred them to the teaching of the Holy Spirit.* Now let me suppose that the doctrine of our Lord's divinity were one of these things, should we be warranted in rejecting it because it were not contained in the Old Testament or the Gospels? To adopt for a moment even the author's extravagant supposition, that there are two Gods, upon what principle could he determine that they should both be revealed at the same time? But when there is but one God, and that one God was revealed to the Jews, they were not deceived, but instructed in so far as God saw meet to instruct them, although full and explicit information was not given to them of the nature of that one God as consisting of a plurality of persons;—especially as they were referred to future teachers who should arise and instruct them further in the mysteries of God. But our author's principle would prohibit them from receiving any further instruction on that, or indeed on any other subject. It would lead them to cast back with contempt every future revela-

* John xvi. 12, 13.

tion, saying, "if this had been true it would have been revealed to our fathers." Warburton took some pains to show that a future state was not revealed in the books of Moses. Supposing him to have established this point, our author's principle would warrant us to infer that there is no future state. What indeed is his argument but that of the French Atheists against Christianity? "If," said they, "Christianity were true, we should not be under the necessity of searching for it in any book; it would have been written in the heavens, so that a man could not open his eyes without seeing it." I doubt not that the author's indignant answer to such an argument would be, "It is written where God has seen fit to write it, and we ought to receive it with thankfulness in the form in which he has been pleased to give it." So I would answer his argument. The doctrine is written where God has seen fit to write it, and it is our business to receive it without cavil, as he has been pleased to announce it.

On the same principle the author reasons respecting the attributes of the Deity ascribed to the Redeemer. Thus with regard to the attribute of omniscience, he says, "When the Scriptures speak of the wisdom and knowledge of Jehovah, it is not in the way of allusion and reference. They do not put us off with two or three ambiguous or mysterious phrases, the meaning of which can be extracted only by adepts in occult theology. But they tell us, plumply, in such terms as carry instantaneous conviction to the heart and mind, that he is perfect in knowledge and infinite in understanding."* And then he proceeds to adduce other passages in which the omniscience of God is explicitly

* Page 42, 2d Edit.

taught. Now there would be some semblance of weight in this argument if, as he all along supposes, we held that there are two Gods. But if Jesus was a manifestation in human nature of the same God, who was otherwise manifested in the old dispensation, then all that was necessary was to identify him with the God of Israel; after which all the descriptions given in the Old Testament of the divine attributes, are immediately applicable to him. That there is abundance in the New Testament for this purpose, will I trust be proved in the sequel. The author might as reasonably infer that the attributes of God form no part of the Gospel, because they are not described with the same fulness and precision in the New Testament as they are in the Old, as that Jesus was not God on that account. Every view of Scripture presses upon us the propriety of receiving it implicitly as it stands, without attempting to dictate what it ought to be.

6. The appeals which our author and other Unitarian writers make from the New to the Old Testament, call for a few observations on the legitimate principles of reasoning from one of these parts of Scripture to the other.

It is manifest on the most cursory inspection of the Bible, that its doctrines are gradually developed; and that every succeeding part of it casts additional light on that which had gone before. The gradual developement of its doctrines during the many centuries that were occupied in completing it, is one important evidence of its divine original. This observation is peculiarly applicable to the New Testament, as forming a sequel to the Old. In that completion of revelation many subjects are clearly explained

which were but obscurely hinted at in the Old Testament. The Gospels and Acts of the Apostles add to the historical facts of Scripture, and contain an account of the fulfilment of many of the Old Testament prophecies; while the Epistles are little more than a commentary on the whole of the historical facts both of the Old and New Testament. One who reads the Old Testament with this inspired authoritative commentary in his hands, will find that every important fact contained in it is explained, or instructions, more or less direct, for the application of it in the religious system of Scripture (which was fundamentally the same from the beginning) furnished to him.

From these features of Scripture it seems to be self-evident, that the Old Testament is to be explained by the New; and not the New Testament by the Old. And yet with singular perversion of exposition or elucidation, our author and other Unitarian writers frequently attempt to carry us back from the clearness and precision of the New Testament to the comparative darkness and uncertainty of the Old Testament. When two acts of Parliament bear on the same subject, the former is always explained by the latter; but our author would invert this common sense procedure and insist on involving the clearness of the latter in the imperfection and obscurity of the former.

For example, Matthew in the first chapter of his Gospel says, that the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus took place that the appointment of God, declared by the prophet when he said, "Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son," &c. might be accomplished. As an exposition of this passage, Unitarian writers have been in the habit of insisting on a supposed ambiguous meaning in the Hebrew

word rendered *virgin*, asserting that it was applied to any young woman whether married or not; although there is no such ambiguity in the Greek word by which the inspired writer renders it. Our author, however, seems to relinquish this interpretation, and, on the authority of Rammohun Roy, asserts that by the *virgin* was meant Jerusalem; which is sometimes figuratively called a virgin, and which then might be said to be pregnant with Hezekiah.* Hezekiah, however, is not once mentioned or alluded to in the whole prophecy; and the interpretation rests solely on the poetical imagination of Rammohun Roy. Matthew explains the passage, which else would be very difficult, so much so that the meaning of it never seems to have been thought of by any person, Jewish or Christian, till Rammohun Roy discovered it, and ascribes to it a most important and significant meaning, worthy of the oracles of God. But the author prefers Rammohun Roy's explanation of the Hebrew. He tells us that "the import of the Greek phrase (that it might be fulfilled) as commonly used by the sacred writers, is no more, as Le Clerc (a Unitarian writer) has justly observed, than that such words of any of the prophets may be applied with truth to such an event." Thus, at one blow, on the sole authority of Le Clerc, is the whole record of the fulfilment of prophecy thrown into uncertainty, and we are called upon to relinquish the plain, obvious meaning of such words as these, "That it might be fulfilled," and reduce them to the sense of a mere poetical or oratorical allusion. The author would have served his cause more effectually by giving examples of this meaning of that phrase, than

* Page 24.

by quoting the opinion of Le Clerc, and asserting that it is a just opinion. Here the author is the disciple of Le Clerc and Rammohun Roy rather than of the New Testament.*

Again, the apostle Paul, in commenting on a passage in the book of Psalms,† expressly tells us that it was addressed to the Son of God. His words are, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom; thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." This passage would have been quite incomprehensible if the apostle's explanation of it had not been given. That it should be said to any person, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," and yet that, in the same sentence, it should be said to the same person, therefore "God, *thy God* hath anointed thee," would have been as inexplicable as that other passage to which our Lord alludes, "The Lord said unto my Lord," &c. were it not for the revelation of him who may indeed be called the "*divine Son of God*"—who was God, and yet who was with God. The author asserts, that the psalm is Solomon's epithalamium, although Solomon is not once mentioned or alluded to in it. He says that the psalm is called in the original "a song of loves." He should in common fairness have added, that it is in the title only that it is thus called; and that the titles to the Psalms are regarded by almost all critics, probably by himself, as of no authority whatever; that many of them are comparatively modern, and that no critic or commentator of any note pays attention to the title in explaining any

* See above, page 29. † Heb. i. Psalm xlv.

Psalm. He quotes a Dr. Young who had the temerity to change the word *God* into *prince*, without one example in the whole Hebrew language to justify him; and thus he would introduce into a sacred hymn in the Old Testament praise addressed to a creature—an anomaly to which there is nothing that bears the most distant resemblance in the whole Bible; and which would have furnished a sanction for the grossest idolatry. All these vain suppositions are at once superseded by the inspired authoritative comment of the apostle, "to the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." When the Lord breaks silence to explain his own word, it becomes us to listen with profound reverence, and to receive his explanation with implicit belief.

Again, there is no word of more definite meaning than the Greek word rendered God. In the singular number it has but one sense in the whole New Testament, namely the one living and true God, except when some word is added to alter the meaning, as "Your God Remphan. In the plural number like the English word *gods*, it is applied to the false gods of the heathen. The Hebrew word rendered God, is as definite in the singular number (that is with a singular construction,) as the Greek or English words, but in the plural, (that is with a plural construction, for the form of the word is always plural,) besides being applied in a bad sense to signify false gods, it is employed to signify magistrates or judges. From this use of the word as a plural, it is pleaded that as applied to the Messiah, it is ambiguous, and might signify no more, than that he was to be a ruler or judge. But in the New Testament all ambiguity is removed, by the application of the Greek

title, "God," to our blessed Lord in the singular number. Our author however instead of explaining the Old by the New Testament, insists on explaining the New Testament by the Old; and would persuade us, that when the Lord Jesus is called God, even in the New Testament, and without reference to any passage in the Old Testament, it signifies only that he is a ruler or judge, and not that he was as the word uniformly signifies, the only living and true God.

Yet again, few words can have a more determinate signification, than the Greek words that signify, to *purchase*, to *redeem* or *ransom*: and they are repeatedly and unequivocally applied, as descriptive of the means by which the Lord Jesus procured for us salvation. The author however finds, that the Hebrew words rendered *buy*, *redeem*, *ransom*, &c. are, as he conceives, used when there was no purchase or redemption properly so called; namely, to describe the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, who were redeemed he says, "not with silver and gold, but by a mighty and outstretched arm;" and therefore he would infer, that we are not bought or redeemed by the blood of Christ, but merely delivered by his power. Our author is I conceive in error, when he supposes that the Israelites were not redeemed or purchased, in the sense of a ransom or price having been given for them. They were redeemed in Isaac, when Abraham was commanded to sacrifice him, and when he was spared and a ram substituted for him. They were redeemed when Joseph was sold into Egypt, to be the instrument of preserving his father's house. They were redeemed when the Egyptians and the Canaanites were destroyed, that they might be delivered and established in their own land. Thus

the prophet Isaiah says, "I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee."* But whatever view may be taken of this does not affect our present argument. Even if it could be shown that the Israelites were not properly speaking ransomed or redeemed—that no one was made to suffer that they might be exalted—that fact would prove only that the Hebrew words were capable of being applied where there was no purchase. But no looseness of signification in the Hebrew words can affect the precision and clearness of the Greek words. If the Hebrew language had only one word to express two ideas, the Greek language had a word for each of these ideas. And we must bring the obscurity of the Hebrew words to be explained by the precision of the Greek words, and not attempt to involve the Greek in the uncertainty of the Hebrew.

As our last example of this species of reasoning which is frequently employed, and which our author fully sanctions,† I would observe that the apostle Paul employs a large portion of his epistle to the Hebrews, besides many allusions in his other epistles, to show that the priesthood and sacrifices under the Old Testament dispensation, with all the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, were but figures or shadows of heavenly things, intended to serve a temporary purpose, till the real priest should come, and the real sacrifice should be offered. But here again, with the same perversion of interpretation and explanation, Unitarian writers assert, that it is our Lord's priesthood and sacrifice which were figurative, and that the priesthood and sacrifices of the Jews were the only

* Isa. xliii. 3. † See page 72 (note.)

true sacrifices; although when they are required to explain in what sense they were so, they are under the necessity of betaking themselves to some sort of typical or figurative meaning, of which they can say little, except that no real atonement was offered. Our Lord is thus supposed to be called a priest and a sacrifice, merely by a kind of poetical allusion to those objects with which the Jews were familiar,—he was figuratively a priest in allusion to what was itself figurative.

Now it is obvious that this method of appealing from the New to the Old Testament, is calculated to carry us back to the obscurity of the Jewish dispensation, instead of bringing that old dispensation to the light of the Gospel. One of the wise and beneficent arrangements of providence as a preparation for the introduction of the Gospel, was to introduce the Greek language into Judea. The Hebrew language was beautifully fitted for the imperfect dispensation which was established by means of it; as it admitted a latitude in the use of words that was favourable to a system of typical poetry and of prophecies, which was not to be fully understood till its accomplishment. But the Greek language is, perhaps, one of the most precise in its words and phrases of any in the world; and to appeal from the precision of the Greek language to the comparative uncertainty of the Hebrew—from the light of the Gospel dispensation to the obscurity of the dispensation of types and shadows, is an attempt to persuade us to renounce our privileges and voluntarily to involve ourselves in perplexity. We do not wonder that those who when our Lord appeared on earth were waiting for the consolation of Israel, and even his own apostles were in doubt and darkness respecting the person of the Messiah and the nature of his

kingdom, having only the Old Testament for their guide: but that men should willingly shut their eyes against the clear light which the New Testament casts upon the Old; that they should prefer groping their way into the Old Testament, without the aid of the inspired commentary upon it which God has vouchsafed to them; and that instead of bringing the Old Testament to the light of the comment, they should seek to plunge the comment itself into the darkness and uncertainty of that very dispensation on which it was intended to shed a heavenly illumination, is I am afraid to be accounted for only by our author's own hypothesis, that they love the obscurity better than the light.

7. I have to complain of still another false and unfair principle of reasoning of which our author avails himself, namely, opposing a mere negative proposition to our positive doctrine; and instead of attempting to establish some other view of the person of the Son of God in opposition to that which we entertain, contenting himself with a mere negative—that Jesus Christ is not God. In the preface to his first edition he complains of our ranking all our opponents in one class; and whether they be Arians or nick-named Socinians, declaring them to be all alike infected with leprosy and heresy. After this complaint we should have expected that the author himself would have kept these classes distinct, and especially that he would have explicitly declared to which class he himself belongs; but with singular inconsistency he, in the very same preface, tells us that he divides all Christians into two denominations, Unitarians and Trinitarians; and that with their various subdivisions (that is,

whether they be Arians or Socinians) he does not interfere; "deeming it enough to contend for the supreme Deity of God alone." And the author, true to his proposal, takes care not to commit himself to any positive opinion respecting the person of the Redeemer, whether he was God, or a mere man, or a created being superior to man. He says, indeed, that the Unitarians believe in the divinity of the Son of God. But this, as it appears, is a mere abuse of language; for he himself explains it to mean only that his character, his mission, his doctrine, his power, and authority were divine—that is, they were from God, not that he was in the proper sense of the word a divine person. He tells us that all Unitarians believe in the divinity of the Son of God in this sense, although many whom he includes under that name believe him to be a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary.* There is, indeed, a strange incoherency in the sentiments which he ascribes to Unitarians. He gives us their creed, but he afterwards tells us that many of them do not believe it. He says, for example, that they believe that the supreme God created the heavens and the earth; but he

* The practice which Unitarian writers frequently adopt of using words in an arbitrary sense, which they themselves affix to them, cannot be too strongly reprobated. Some profess to believe in the *justice* of God, but when they explain themselves they understand *justice* to mean *mercy*. Many persons who read our author's pamphlet were persuaded that he believed the very doctrine which it is his object to oppose; because he calls our Lord the divine Son of God, and says that Unitarians believe in his divinity. And if the language had been used in its usual and proper import, this undoubtedly would have been his meaning. But it appears that he used the word, "divine," with that sort of licence by which song writers speak of a divine creature. This, however, is to darken, not to elucidate a subject. For in discussing such topics accuracy in the use of words is peculiarly requisite.

afterwards mentions some among them who believe that Jesus created the heavens and the earth, although they do not regard him as the supreme God. He tells us that they believe God the Father to be the sole object of divine worship, and that prayer should be addressed to him alone; yet he afterwards mentions some among them who believe Jesus to be a mere man; while they hold that he ought to be worshipped as a god.

I am not unaware of the polemical dexterity of thus proposing to defend a mere negative proposition against a positive doctrine, on a subject on which, it is freely admitted, there are difficulties. It is much more easy to pull down than to build up—to ridicule a doctrine than to propose another which cannot be ridiculed. The author knew very well, that, if he had declared any positive opinion respecting the nature and person of the Redeemer, he would not only have deprived himself of the aid of many of the texts which he has quoted in support of his negative proposition, but would have arrayed them against him. It is manifest that if he avow himself to be an Arian, he at once brings himself into opposition, not only with those texts which teach that Jesus was the true God, but also with those texts which declare him to have been a man, and renders it necessary for him to explain how he could be both a man and a being superior to man. If he avow himself to be a Socinian, he brings himself into opposition with those texts which indicate that he was more than man, but which yet do not explicitly declare him to be God.

Indeed the whole plausibility and simplicity of his creed, on account of which he so highly values it, depends upon his omissions. He says

nothing of the person and nature of Christ, about which the Scripture says so much; nothing of his priesthood and atonement, which occupies nearly a whole book of Scripture; nothing of the Holy Spirit, who he is, or whether, as Dr. Bruce imagines, there are two Holy Spirits. He appears to be in the condition of those disciples at Ephesus who were baptized only into the baptism of John the Baptist, and who had not so much as heard whether there were any Holy Ghost.* He, of course, omits all mention of the peculiar operations of the Holy Ghost,—his regenerating influences, his sanctifying influences, his comforting influences. With the change of Jesus for Mahommed his creed would be nearly that of Islam—"There is one God, and Mahommed is his prophet." The creed of Islam is indeed the more simple of the two. But if he intends that we should regard the Unitarian's creed with which he furnishes us as containing all that is necessary for a Christian to believe, he should be able to produce a dispensation for the neglect or rejection of every thing else that is revealed in the Bible. The truth is, that a system of religion, like a system of astronomy, should embrace all the facts, for so long as any remain unaccounted for, the accuracy of the system cannot be relied upon. The author here again reverts to the obsolete method of philosophizing, namely, to build systems on the more obvious phenomena of nature, neglecting as trivial, facts, which, although not so prominent, were equally important. He ought to remember that all the old systems of philosophy, in all its branches, were overturned by attending to those apparently minute facts which they had superciliously

* Acts xix. 1—7.

overlooked: and especially since he himself, in several instances, asserts of single texts that they are sufficient to overturn whole systems of Scripture interpretation; he should feel himself to be the more bound not to neglect or overlook any declaration of Scripture. The introduction of one article, for example, embodying what the Scripture says respecting the nature and person of the Redeemer, and also of the atonement or reconciliation made by his death; and of another article embodying the various declarations and intimations respecting the Holy Ghost, his nature, and his operations, might, perhaps, lead to a total revolution in his whole creed.

I therefore enter my protest against his negative proposition respecting the person of the Redeemer. On no pretence can it be regarded as a subject of small importance to Christianity. It is manifest that the whole nature of the Gospel must be influenced by the determination of the elementary question, "Who is Jesus Christ?" If he be a mere man, and sustained only the character of a prophet, the Gospel is one thing; if he be God, "Who was manifest in the flesh," the Gospel is another, and a totally different thing; and if he was neither God nor man, but a created being, of course inferior to God, but greatly superior to man, the Gospel is still different from what it would be on either of the two former suppositions. I hold that a man is not qualified to reason upon any doctrine of the Gospel, or to be a teacher of Christianity, till he is prepared to answer these elementary questions of the religion of Jesus, "Who is Jesus Christ? Whence came he? Was he a mere man? Was he a created angel? Or was he God manifest in human nature? Nor do I think that any man should be greatly offended, if we

should refuse to him even the appellation of a Christian till he has declared his belief on these elementary points on which the whole nature of the Gospel depends. How can a minister feed his flock with a mere negative on such subjects?

"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

And can a Christian congregation be satisfied with a negation of instruction on topics which lie at the very foundation of Christianity? Could they expect to be acknowledged as Christians if they should betray such a disposition towards the great Founder of our religion, as that they would be satisfied if they could divest him of that glory which a large proportion of those who profess to be his disciples conceive to belong to him, without knowing or caring who he was, or whence he came?

It will be our own fault if we permit our author to avail himself of his manœuvre, which indeed Unitarian writers frequently practise, of opposing to our doctrine respecting the person of the Redeemer a mere negative, which embraces in its ample canopy Jews, Mahommedans, Arians, Socinians, and Deists;—all of whom will most heartily concur with him, both in his positive proposition—that there is one God, and also in his negative proposition,—that Jesus Christ is not God. It would be betraying the cause of truth, to permit him thus to shut up from us a multitude of passages of Scripture, which, if they do not prove the Lord Jesus to be God, make it abundantly evident that he was more than man. I shall therefore, in the first place, meet his negative proposition with this general one, that he is at once a man and more than man.

THESE observations will enable the reader to detect a large portion of our author's fallacious reasoning, and reduce that portion of his work on which we shall have occasion to animadvert particularly within a much narrower compass. The attentive reader of the pamphlet will find the author sometimes speaking of the Scripture as if it were not, except in a very loose sense, given by inspiration of God; especially in one passage which has already been noticed in his first edition, but which has been suppressed in the second. He will find him frequently bringing his ideas of what it would be common sense and reason in the Author of Scripture to reveal, in opposition to what he actually does reveal. He will find him sometimes bringing one passage of Scripture to contradict another, and then claiming the liberty of choosing which of the passages he is to believe, and which he is to get rid of as he best may be able. He will frequently find him building arguments on his own mistatements of the doctrine which he opposes, or upon weak and absurd things which its mistaken abettors have said respecting it. He will find him, instead of explaining the Old Testament by the clearer light of the New, attempting to involve the New Testament in the obscurity of the Old. And he will find him throughout his whole performance supporting a mere negative, bending his whole force to cast down one doctrine, but without any attempt to build up another in its place;—stating strongly all his objections to one view of the subject, but carefully abstaining from committing himself to any other view of it, and thus enabling us to shew what objections lie against his view of it. And when he finds the author reasoning upon these principles he will, I trust, be convinced that he

reasons fallaciously; that his arguments tend, not to light and knowledge, but to darkness and ignorance.

I would however remind my readers, that, although it is of importance to fix just principles of reasoning from Scripture, yet that no reasoning, however just, is sufficient of itself to conduct us to a saving and sanctifying knowledge of the truth. A humble and teachable spirit will conduct us further into a knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, than the most accurate and ingenious train of argument. That faith by which we discern the light of divine truth has more analogy to a new sense opened within us, than to the results of a train of reasoning. Spiritual things are concealed from the natural man by the films that cover his eyes. We are by nature spiritually blind, because sin has blinded our eyes. And we are in the direct way to spiritual illumination, not when we are reasoning, but when, conscious of our blindness, we are praying that we may receive our sight. Let me, therefore, entreat my reader, before he proceeds further, to present himself before the throne of grace as a suppliant, to ask mercy of God, and to ask that his eyes may be opened to discern the truth, whatever that truth may be—however opposed to all his prepossessions and habits of thinking. Let him ask wisdom of Him who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. For if an affectionate parent, when his child asks of him bread, will not refuse him, nor give him a stone, "How much more will our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Ask and ye shall receive, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

CHAP. II.

JESUS CHRIST A MAN, AND YET MORE THAN MAN.

INSTEAD of entering directly into the proof that the Lord Jesus was God, I shall devote a few pages to prove in the first instance, that while he was a man, he was more than man;—partly for the purpose of exposing still further the fallacy to which Unitarian writers frequently betake themselves of supporting a mere negative respecting the person of the Redeemer,—and partly to show how a multitude of texts bear on our doctrine which do not directly assert the divine nature of the Saviour.

Our author, as has been already observed, does not avow any positive opinion on the subject of the nature and person of the Lord Jesus; yet from some of his expressions I think it may be collected that he is what is usually termed a Socinian,—that is, he conceives him to have been a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary. Thus, in a passage which has already been alluded to, after quoting the words of Mr. Maguire, that a Socinian's objections are well founded, he adds—"In these sentiments of Mr. Maguire, Unitarians most cordially concur;"—which I think he could hardly have said, had he not been himself a Socinian. In the same passage he says that he prefers the term Unitarian

to Socinian, for reasons to be afterwards shewn. Now these reasons so far as I have been able to discover them, do not consist in any difference of opinion from Socinians respecting the nature or person of the Redeemer; but respecting the honour that is due to him. The Socinians, while they held him to be a mere man, yet held that he ought to be worshipped as God; while our author, admitting the inconsistency of these tenets, holds that he is not to be worshipped as God.

Again, I observe that his arguments and interpretations of Scripture are chiefly those used and adopted by Socinian writers, some of whom he quotes and recommends with unqualified approbation;—such as Priestly, Belsham, Yeates, Channing, Rammohun Roy, &c.; and I scarcely think that he could introduce the writings of such authors to his readers without some intimation of error in their sentiments, had he not agreed with them in all material points. The choice of the name *Unitarian* seems to point to the same tenets, as it is a name currently used in England to designate those who believe in the simple humanity of Christ:—those who believe that he is a being of a higher order than man, yet not God, being called Arians. His identifying himself also with the Unitarians of the Continent of Europe, as he does in passages to be afterwards noticed, who are known to believe generally, not only that our Lord was a mere man, but that he was in some measure a *sinful* man—an opinion held also by Dr. Priestly whom the author so highly eulogizes, points with sufficient precision to the class of divines with whom he takes his station.

From these indications I cannot but infer that our author is what is usually called a Socinian—

that he believes in the simple humanity of the Redeemer. Whether with Dr. Priestly he regards him as a sinner I know not; but if he does not, it might have been reasonably expected that, when he eulogised Dr. Priestly, he would have intimated his dissent from him on that point. He asserts indeed that there are no Socinians in Ireland, and I should have regarded that assertion as decisive of the point that he himself is not a Socinian; but that he furnishes us with a peculiar definition of Socinianism, of which he is certainly to be exculpated, namely, believing in the simple humanity of Christ, and yet worshipping him as God. For although I must believe, at least till he explicitly declare himself, that he regards the Saviour as a mere man; yet he does not betray any indication of the solicism of worshipping him as God.

I have thus bestowed some pains to ascertain our author's opinions on this point, that my readers may understand what he would have them to believe, when he would persuade them to reject the doctrine that Jesus was the true God manifest in the flesh.

In proceeding to show, that if the Scripture is to be regarded and treated as the standard of truth, the Lord Jesus was more than man; it is necessary to remind my readers that we, as well as Unitarians, believe that he was and is a man. Our author reasons sometimes as if we did not believe in the humanity of the Redeemer;—as when he sets in array before us those texts which declare him to be a man. But these texts are as necessary to our views of the Saviour as they are to his. There were certain sects in ancient times who denied the reality of our Lord's humanity, believing that he was a man in appearance only; while others denied his divinity.—

Now as distinguished from the one class, we hold that Jesus was really and properly man; and as distinguished from the other that he was really and properly God. The articles of the two establishments of England and Scotland are as clear and express on the subject of our Lord's humanity, as they are upon that of his divinity.—The humanity of the Lord Jesus is indeed essential to the whole system of doctrine laid down in these formularies. It is in virtue of his being man that we conceive he was qualified to stand in our room, and bear the punishment due to our sins. It is altogether preposterous therefore to cite passages which declare the humanity of Christ, as if they bore against our doctrine, when they are absolutely necessary to it.

On this preliminary part of the subject I do not deem it necessary to enter at great length. It is I confess to me utterly inconceivable how any man can read the New Testament without seeing that the Lord Jesus is represented throughout the whole of it as a being of a higher order than man. That it must be a very difficult task indeed to extract from it any other view of the Redeemer there is a shrewd indication in the fact, that a considerable proportion of those who have emancipated themselves from the dictation of the Council of Nice, and of the Pope, and also of Calvin, or who have never bowed down to these as idols, who are disposed to go as far as their judgment and conscience will permit them in supporting the empire of common sense and reason, and whom our author claims as his brethren in the faith, are yet constrained, by an examination of the Scripture itself, to admit that the Lord Jesus is a being of a higher order than man—even of an angelic or superangelic nature. In fact the attempt to reconcile the simple hu-

manity of the Redeemer to the language of the New Testament is of modern origin. No one seems to have imagined it to be possible to do so till about the time of Socinus or afterwards.—That there were persons in the early ages of the church who believed in the simple humanity of the Redeemer is admitted; but they uniformly rejected a large portion of the New Testament. Their followers however in modern times have adopted a different method; and instead of avowedly rejecting any part of the New Testament, they attempt to bend it to their doctrine. And partly by lowering the authority of the whole; partly by converting it into eastern allegory and metaphor and poetical allusion to the Old Testament; and partly by ascribing to Greek words a Hebrew signification, with many other expedients of the most ingenious criticism; they have satisfied themselves that it is to be understood in a sense totally different from that which its language seems obviously intended to convey. A very large proportion however of those who have emancipated themselves from all their supposed prepossessions, still revolt from this system of criticism. With all their anxiety to bring the Bible into harmony with their ideas of sound philosophy, they feel themselves compelled by the force of evidence, to admit that the Lord Jesus was a supernatural being who visited this earth—a created being indeed, but of the very highest order, and entitled to a worship, if not divine, at least of a more sacred description than might lawfully be addressed to any other creature. Arianism therefore I conceive to be so far an homage to the power of truth from a very important quarter,—a virtual protest on the part of a large proportion of those whom our author claims as his partizans, against his own system of Scripture interpretation.

In proving that, according to the New Testament, the Lord Jesus was more than man, it is difficult to determine where to commence, the evidences are so multifarious.

Let us glance at what is said respecting his existence before his appearance in this world.—Thus, "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven."* "He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all."†—This passage is part of the testimony of John the Baptist to Jesus. Again, "For I came down from heaven," said Jesus, "not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me."‡ "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father."§ "What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before."‖ "And now O Father," said the blessed Jesus in his intercessory prayer, "glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."¶ The first man is of the earth earthy, the "second man is the Lord from heaven."**—We are told that the word "Lord" does not occur in some manuscripts. Be it so, although Griesbach has decided for the retention of the word, still what can be more obvious than the declaration that he was from heaven. Let this suffice for the present in regard to our Lord's previous existence. Other passages will afterwards be cited which imply the same fact. But let it be remembered that if he had a conscious

* John iii. 13. † John iii. 31. ‡ John vi. 38. § John vi. 46.
‖ John vi. 62. ¶ John xvii. 5. ** 1 Cor. xv. 47.

existence before he appeared in the world, he was of another nature than man.

The emphatic and peculiar manner in which the Lord Jesus is declared to be the Son, the only begotten Son of God, furnishes another class of testimonies to the superiority of his nature. It is admitted that men are in many instances called sons of God, that God promises to be a father to his people, and that they shall be his sons; nay that the metaphor is carried still farther, and they are said to be heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ. But it is manifest to one who reads the Scriptures with any degree of attention, that this title is given to the Lord Jesus in a higher and more emphatic sense than that in which it is ever given to any human creature. Our author himself admits that the title was pre-eminently *due* to the blessed Saviour;* although he does not explain on what grounds the title was thus *due* to him.

The Scripture frequently presents before us the Great God of heaven and the Lord Jesus as separated from all the universe, and bearing to one another the relation of Father and Son. For example, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."† I shall have occasion to refer to this passage in treating a subsequent part of the subject; but what I wish at present the reader to attend to is the gradation marked:—"No man, not the angels, neither the Son, but the Father;" where the Son is distinguished from man and placed above the angels. Again, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, &c. For God sent not his Son into the world to con-

* Page 17. † Mark xiii. 32.

demn the world—The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into his hand."*—In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And we have seen and do testify that THE FATHER sent THE SON to be the SAVIOUR of the world."† In these and many other passages, the Lord Jesus is manifestly represented as THE Son of God; intimating that there is but one Son, as there is but one Father. And that he is called the Son in a higher sense than that in which even the angels can be called so, is manifest, not only from a passage already cited, but from the emphatic question put by the apostle Paul, "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?"‡

There is a remarkable passage to the same effect in the Gospel by John, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work."§ When our Lord spoke thus, the Jews, we are told, sought the more to kill him; because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.—On this our author observes that the Jews only meant to charge him with assuming the privilege of breaking the Sabbath day equally as if he had been its institutor. "This," says he, "is the point of equality meant and asserted." Let this for the present be granted, is it conceivable that a mere man should repel such a charge with such an answer. "You charge me with breaking

* John iii. 16, 17, 35. † 1 John iv. 9, 10, 14. ‡ Heb. i, 5. § John v. 17.

the Sabbath,—my Father, the God of heaven, does what he thinks fit on the Sabbath, and I do so likewise."

Among texts of this description may be classed Philip. ii. 6.—" Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself," &c. Now this passage manifestly points to a time before Jesus was made in the likeness of man, before he took upon him the form of a servant, before he had emptied or divested himself of his glory, when he was in the form of God, and (as we render the expression,) thought it not robbery to be equal with God. This passage, therefore attributes at once a previous existence, and a very exalted nature to our blessed Lord. The author says,* " The meaning is this—who being in the form of a God, or a person of godlike perfections, did not rapaciously arrogate equality with the supreme Deity—or more literally, did not meditate such an act of rapine or robbery as to place himself on an equality with Jehovah; but made himself of no reputation," &c. I shall have occasion to animadvert on our author's criticism on this passage more fully in the sequel, but in the mean time I would observe, that his view of it places the Lord Jesus far above the rank of humanity. Who indeed could he be, who divested himself of glory to become the servant of the Lord, and who could be presented to us as a very pattern of humility because he did not meditate such an act of robbery as to

* Page 21.

place himself on an equality with the eternal God? This could never be a poor weak child of mortality.

The works that are ascribed to the Lord Jesus, even adopting the lowest view which ever has been entertained of them by persons who acknowledge the inspiration of the Scriptures, are abundantly sufficient to prove his previous existence and his superiority to human nature. Thus, "By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers."* On this passage the author remarks—"Even granting, according to the high Arian hypothesis, that Christ was the creator of the material frame of nature," which however he does not grant, for he says it is "contrary to the declaration of Jehovah himself—Is. xliv. 24, he was only the agent of omnipotence."† To the subject of this agency we shall again have occasion to refer; in the mean time I observe that it is quite impossible to adopt so low a view of this 'creation' ascribed to the Redeemer, as to bring it within the limits of the existence and power of a man, who first began to exist in the reign of Augustus Cæsar; without, at the same time, supposing that the apostle was not merely uninspired, but destitute of common understanding. He further adds that his being *born* proves that he was not self-existent. Be it so for the present, what are we to understand by his being the *first born* of every creature? Taking even that view of the expression, which would represent the Lord Jesus as a creature, still itgives him an existence before all creatures.—Again, "By whom also," (that is the Son) "He made

* Col. i. 16, 17. † Page 29.

the worlds." That is, says our author, the æons or ages, not the heavens and the earth. The creation of these ages or worlds however is declared, Heb. xi. 3, to be the work of God.—"Through faith we understand that the worlds, *æons*, were framed by the word of God." Can the making or framing of these worlds then be the work of a mere man born about 1800 years ago? "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God—all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.—He was in the world (not *æon* but *kosmos* world,) and the world was made by him." I reserve the consideration of the author's critique on this passage to a future part of our work; and only observe that those who imagine that such things can be predicated of a mere man, are beyond the reach of argument.

The importance that is attached to just views of the person of the Redeemer indicates that he was more than man. Jesus asked "Whom do men say that I the son of man am? And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, &c."* Again, Peter confessed "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God."† The Ethiopian Eunuch said to Philip, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,"‡ and upon this profession Philip baptized him. "Every spirit

* Matth. xvi. 13, 17. † John vi. 69. ‡ Acts viii. 37.

that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."* The reader will recollect that we are not at present proving that Jesus is God, but merely that he is more than man, which may be inferred from the importance that is attached, in these and similar passages, to just views of his person. Where is there another instance in the whole Bible, of any servant of God attaching any importance to his own parentage or extraction; or requiring of those who listened to his instructions a profession of their belief as to who he was? Such questions from Peter or Paul as "Whom do men say that I am? "Whom say ye that I am?" would be altogether alien from the tenor of Scripture.

The same truth may be inferred from the importance that is attached to his death. When the efficacy of his mission is spoken of, it is generally his death, and not his life and teaching, that is referred to. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."† "Who, his own self, bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed."‡ Let the reader consider how the apostles bring forward his condescension in dying for us, as the great motive that should bind all his followers, over the whole world, and throughout all ages, to live not to themselves

* 1 John iv. 2, v. 5, iv. 15. † Isa. liii. 5.
‡ 1 Peter ii. 24.

but to him—not to follow their own inclinations but to seek to please him in all things, and say if the death of any mere servant of God is placed on the same footing. "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear, for as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the *precious blood* of Christ."*—"And ye are not your own for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's."†—"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live should henceforth not live to themselves, but unto him *who died for them* and rose again."‡ "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die; but God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners *Christ died for us.*" § "But God forbid that I should glory, save *in the cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ." ‖ "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ? Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for Christ—that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."¶ Now, is it possible that all this importance is ascribed to the *death* of a mere mortal man? But he died, it is said, to confirm his doctrine. So did Paul, so did Peter; yet their death is not even recorded, but only foretold in Scripture: so did Stephen and James, and so did those mul-

* 1 Pet. i. 17, 18, 19. † 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.
§ Rom. v. 7, 8. ‖ Gal. vi, 14 ¶ Phil. iii. 7, 8, 10.

titudes whose sufferings are briefly referred to by the apostle,* "Who were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword; who wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy." But Jesus rose again from the dead; but so did the daughter of Jairus and the widow's son of Nain, and Dorcas; and especially so did those Saints who rose with Jesus; but whose resurrection is dismissed in a single sentence. And upon what principle is it that so much importance is attached to the death of a mere man? If Jesus was indeed the "Lord from heaven," the reason of this is obvious and perfectly accounted for; but it is utterly inexplicable on the supposition that he was a mere mortal man.

I might further appeal to the faith and love and obedience that are demanded for the Saviour in proof of his being more than man; but as I shall afterwards have occasion to advert to these topics, I shall omit them for the present; only reminding the reader that all those evidences which prove the Lord Jesus to be the true God, which are afterwards to be adduced, are to be added to those proofs which we have now adduced that he was more than man.

I may probably have dwelt longer on this part of the subject than many of my readers may think necessary, especially as it is understood that there are very few persons in this island, who regard the Redeemer as a mere man; and I may be told by our author or his friends, that I have been proving what he does not dispute. I wished however not to take even this preliminary doctrine for granted; but to entitle

* Heb. xi. 37.

myself to refer to it as an ascertained established point. And if there be any whom these arguments have not convinced that Jesus had a previous existence to his appearing in the world, and that he was more than man, I would earnestly propose to them the consideration of those questions which were put by our Blessed Lord himself to the Pharisees, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? How doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying The Lord said unto my Lord sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then called him Lord, how is he his Son?"* And I forewarn them that they will obtain no assistance in the understanding of this passage from the editors of the Unitarian version of the New Testament; for although they have copious notes on many other passages, they seem to have been struck as dumb by these questions as the Pharisees, who were not "able to answer him a word."

But leaving those who are not convinced to attempt the solution of our Lord's questions; let us attend, for a few moments, to the havoc which the establishment of this fact makes in some of the most eloquent and plausible parts of our author's performance. Let us consider in what light those must regard it, who, although they are not convinced that Jesus was God, are yet convinced that he was more than man.

In the first place, the establishment of this fact lifts the whole subject above the sphere of common sense and reason, and carries it into regions where revelation alone can guide us in our inquiries. That an angel, or the highest spirit of heaven, superior to all angels—one of

* Mat. xxii. 42—45.

whom it could be said, in any conceivable sense, that "he created all things in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible," should become an infant of days, nursed at the breast, and dandled on the lap of a mortal woman—that he should grow in wisdom and stature, spend a life of thirty or forty years in the world—that he should be arraigned as a malefactor, condemned, and actually crucified, is to me just as mysterious, and in some points of view much more so, than if the God of heaven himself should have submitted to such humiliation. If we are to listen to reason and common sense on this subject, farther than to ascertain by means of them what the Spirit of God has revealed upon it, we must keep within the province of common sense and reason—the scenes of this visible world; and at once adopt the Socinian scheme of reducing our Lord to the rank of a mere mortal. But this we cannot do, and at the same time continue to acknowledge that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Socinianism may be philosophy, and to all the honour which that name is supposed to confer, the abettors of that doctrine are heartily welcome; but it is not Christianity.

Again, the addition of this fact will make a sad inroad on the beautiful simplicity of our author's creed. For besides saying something of the nature and office of the Holy Spirit, which he has totally omitted, he must now state that one who dwelt in heaven with the Father of all—the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person—who created all things, and who upholds all things by the word of his power—who was so high and exalted, that it was a signal proof of humility in him, that "he did not meditate such an act of robbery as to seize upon equality with Jehovah," divested himself of his glory to

take upon him the form of a servant of God, and to be really his servant; was made in the likeness of men, and was really a man; and, being thus found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. He must give such reasons as the Scripture gives for this extraordinary humiliation of so exalted a personage. He must, I fear, introduce into his system a sacrifice—a bloody sacrifice; for if such a being came into the world, as Jesus declares he did, to suffer for us, "To give his life a ransom for many,"* he will find the idea of a sacrifice to be the most simple account that he can give of the transaction. And as he rejects the doctrine that such a sacrifice was necessary to satisfy divine justice, he must find some other account of it, or admit it to be an unexplained mystery. And all these additions will, I fear, in spite of his love of simplicity, require "tedious ratiocination" to explain and support them.

Still further, the establishment of the fact that Jesus was possessed of a higher nature than the human, overturns all that our author has advanced in opposition to the two natures of Christ. As for example:

"They (that is, certain creed-makers) inform us, though the Scripture does not, that Christ had two natures, a human and a divine; and that he speaks and acts sometimes in the one, and sometimes in the other nature. This, for a moment, being admitted, we naturally inquire how it is to be ascertained when any of his discourses or actions are to be ascribed to him as God the Son, and when as the man Jesus. To a plain, unsophisticated reader this is a serious difficulty, *dignus vindice nodus*, a knot which can be untied only by the skill of the infallible

* Matt. xx 28.

church."* Again, "We should have supposed from the reading of the Scriptures, 'Without note or comment,' that the Saviour's character presented to us one symmetrical and consistent whole. But this invention affirms that he was not one, but two persons," (in this our author errs) "and since he does not always speak and act as *a whole and entire*, he must sometimes have spoken and acted as a part and a fraction."†

Now all this is rendered nugatory, if he acknowledge that the blessed Jesus was a being of a higher order than man—an angel, or a still more exalted, yet created intelligence. For nothing can be more clear than that he was really and truly a man. He is frequently, and most emphatically declared to be so. The title, "Son of man," is a title as familiar to the reader of Scripture as the title, "Son of God." He must therefore have had two natures; and, according to the doctrine which the author would force upon his opponents, he must believe that he was not one, but two persons—an angel and a man united. Now it is natural to expect that, being two persons, he should speak sometimes in the one character, and sometimes in the other; and it is for our author himself now to unloose this knot, and to determine at all times in which character the Saviour speaks. From this difficulty he can escape only by denying the real humanity of the Lord Jesus, in which, I suppose, he would find few at the present day to follow him.

Yet again, all the difficulty which our author finds in believing that Jesus was God manifest in human nature, founded on his not, as he conceives, declaring himself explicitly to his disciples and to the Jews, and on his never being

* Page 14. † Page 15.

supposed by the Jews to be more than a prophet, equally attaches itself to the doctrine that he was of an angelic or super-angelic nature. For example:

"If Christ were really Almighty God, it is inconceivable why he did not avow it distinctly, and that it was not as distinctly taught by his apostles. Strange, that his own family and disciples never once suspected him to be the God of Israel! So far from admitting a thought that would have paralysed them, and falsified what they were taught in their law, 'That no man could see the face of God and live,' Exod. xxxiii. 20.—they lived with him on terms of the most friendly and familiar intercourse. On one occasion Peter rebuked him, Matt. xvi. 22."*

The obvious and simple reply to all this is, that Jesus might have his own reasons for not avowing explicitly who he was, one of which might be what the author hints at, "The thought would have paralysed them." He repeatedly parried the question, which it is as difficult to account for on one supposition as another. A fellow-mortal of royal rank, who should choose to visit his subjects in the garb of a poor man, would receive full credit for having sufficient reasons for not explicitly saying who he was, or for avowing his rank only in so far as he saw fit. But our author cannot conceive why Jesus did not avow his rank, and infers that therefore he was possessed of none. But the reply which the establishment of the fact, that he was a being of higher order than man, enables us to give to our author's difficulty of conception, is, that Jesus did not avow himself to be an angel or super-angelic being; and that his disciples would have been as much paralysed by the idea that he was an angel as that he was God. Manoah was as

* Page 10.

much afraid that he would die because he had seen an angel, as if he had seen God himself.* To the same effect is that which is written in page 39, &c. "Why did not the Jews accuse Christ of having advanced the unheard of claim to the second place in the Godhead, and demanded the same adoration as the Father?" The subject of the adoration paid to him will be treated afterwards; but in the mean time I would ask, in return, Why did not they accuse him of declaring himself to be an angel, of advancing the unheard of claim of being the most exalted created spirit in heaven, and demanding the worship due to so glorious a being? They condemned him for blasphemy because he said, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven," and surely they would not have omitted in his accusation, that he had declared himself to have come from the right hand of power, and to be the most exalted creature in the universe. And yet, notwithstanding their silence, we have shown that a lower rank cannot be assigned to him on Scripture authority: and that many of those with whom our author identifies himself, as being Unitarians, concede to him this exalted rank.

Yet more, all that our author has so eloquently and poetically written about mystery is converted into idle declamation—a dream or a reverie, by the establishment of the fact that Jesus, while he was a man, was at the same time a being of celestial origin and nature.

"Mystery," says he, "is a being of magical power in theology, a reconciler of absurdities, and the inseparable companion of priestcraft, fanaticism, and

* Judges xiii. 3, 5, 21, 22.

superstition. She would willingly be received as a descendant of the skies; but in features, dress, manners, and language, she betrays more of an origin from below. There is no spark of heaven in her eye. She wants the cloudless brow, and the voice of celestial music. Her mantle is a pall, and she wears an amulet of dead men's bones, &c. Was not MYSTERY the name inscribed on the forehead of the woman in the Revelations,—who was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus?"*

Yet, in despite of all the author's dislike of mystery, how can he avoid admitting mystery into his system, if he believe the Lord Jesus to be a super-human creature—that is, if he be not a Socinian? For what could be more mysterious than the union of two such natures? What more mysterious than the necessity of it? What more mysterious than the mission of so extraordinary a person to this planet? It is indeed not a little surprising to hear a creature surrounded with mysteries, who cannot push his inquiries into any branch of science to its ultimate questions, without finding himself involved in the mists of the most inexplicable mysteries—to hear a creature so circumstanced venture to speak thus of the mysteries—the ultimate questions in religion. It is not a little daring, in one who professes to receive the Scripture as a revelation from God, to utter such a rhapsody respecting a word which is applied by the Holy Spirit to the doctrines of Christianity; and specifically to the very doctrine which he impugns. "But we," says the apostle Paul, "speak the wisdom of God in a *mystery*, even the *hidden* wisdom which God ordained before the world

* Page 42, 43.

unto our glory." "Let a man so account of us as ministers of Christ and stewards of *the mysteries of God.*"* "And without controversy great is the *mystery* of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."† Probably our author may insist on this passage being rendered, "Which (that is, the mystery) was manifest in the flesh," and in that form it would still more strikingly expose his temerity in holding up the use of the word *mystery* to contempt; for then it would be Jesus himself who is called the mystery of godliness, which was "manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

There is indeed a "*mystery of iniquity*"‡ spoken of in Scripture, which our author confounds with the great *mystery of godliness.* That church which was represented by the woman in the book of the Revelations is called a mystery, not because she had mysteries in her creed, but because she herself was the development of that "mystery of iniquity," which had already begun to work in the days of the apostle Paul. Let the author trace the awful corruption of Christianity which is there personified; let him attempt to explain that deceitful working, by which the doctrines of the Gospel were converted into doctrines of devils—a system of ambition, rapacity, and tyranny, in which Christ with his atonement, his law, and his spirit were withdrawn from practical religion, and substitutions provided in their room; let him

* 1 Cor. ii. 7. iv. 1. † 1 Tim. iii. 16. ‡ 2 Thess. ii. 7.

attempt to account for the toleration of such corruptions—the permission of the practice of such abominations for so long a period in the name of the blessed Jesus, and the havoc that has been made by them both in the bodies and souls of men; and he will find a better reason for the label, MYSTERY, that was written upon her forehead, than that she did not reject whatever she could not fully explain.

This easy and rapid demolition of some of our author's most formidable defences is the natural result of his attempting to build with materials that would not adhere. His troops are easily scattered, because he sought to assemble under one banner, parties that were at war among themselves. By saying nothing positive respecting the person of the Redeemer, he imagined that he might combine both Arians and Socinians in one army; and as he could not hope to engage them together in the establishment of any positive truth, he proposed to lead them on, under the common name Unitarian, to a work of mere destruction. But in this scheme he has totally failed. Arians and Socinians are engaged in a contest that is not so easily composed. They require him to take one side or the other. If he avow himself an Arian, Dr. Priestly, one of his authorities, confutes him, by proving with irresistible evidence, that Jesus was a man. If he avow himself a Socinian, Dr. Samuel Clarke, and other Arian writers, with whom he would identify himself, overturn his system by proving beyond the power of contradiction, that Jesus had a previous existence to his incarnation, and that he was a being of some high celestial order (Dr. Bruce thinks superior to the Holy Spirit,)

sent on a mission to save guilty man by the sacrifice of himself. The consequence of his attempt to combine these two parties is, that one part of his tractate is at war with another. We have shown that if he be an Arian, one portion of his arguments is rendered nugatory; and we are equally prepared to show, that if he be a Socinian, another portion of his arguments must fall. Hence his performance is like the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the feet of which were of iron and clay, that would not coalesce; and which therefore was easily broken to pieces.

CHAP. III.

DIVISION OF THE SUBJECT.

HAVING in the two preceding chapters brought forward certain preliminary matters, we are now prepared to enter on our main subject. It may appear somewhat singular to devote a chapter to the mere distribution of our materials; but as either truth or falsehood may be conveyed by the order in which any subject is treated, and as I conceive that injury has been done by confounding doctrines that are altogether distinct, (although closely allied,) I feel it to be necessary to devote a few pages to the explanation and vindication of the division which I have adopted.

The Rev. author of the pamphlet on which we are animadverting, proposes to prove that "The doctrine of the Trinity is founded neither on Scripture, nor on reason and common sense," &c. But, in a large proportion of his arguments, he endeavours to prove that the Lord Jesus was not God manifest in the flesh. He takes it for granted that if he can show that the Redeemer be not God, the doctrine of the Trinity must fall of course; and, by parity of reason, seems to admit that if the Redeemer be God, the doctrine of the Trinity must be admitted. This however is to confound two doctrines that are essentially distinct. For, on the one hand, it is possible that our Lord might be a manifestation of God in the

flesh, and yet that there might not be three persons in the Godhead; and on the other hand, it might be true that there are three persons in the Godhead, and yet that the Lord Jesus was not God manifest in the flesh. The two doctrines rest on totally different foundations. The intimations, on the one hand, that there is a plurality in the one Deity, and that this plurality consists of three persons, furnish no direct evidence that Jesus was God; and, on the other hand, after Jesus has been proved to be God, that fact requires to be explained by showing that, in his divine nature, he is a different person from the Father and the Spirit; and even when so explained it furnishes only one argument for the doctrine of the Trinity. To complete the proof, it must further be shown, not only that the Father is God, which I suppose will be admitted by all parties, but also that the Holy Spirit is God, and is at the same time a distinct person from the Father and the Son:—and then to these facts may be added the indications that there is a plurality of persons in the Deity, and that that plurality consists of three persons.

There is another distinction of importance between the two doctrines, namely, that the doctrine of our Lord's Divine nature is a doctrine of direct explicit revelation, repeatedly asserted in the plainest terms, supported and illustrated in a vast variety of particulars; whereas that the doctrine of the Trinity is rather a doctrine of inference and of indirect intimation, deduced from what is revealed respecting the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and intimated in the notices of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, in the form of baptism, and in some of the apostolic benedictions, than a doctrine directly and explicitly declared. The doctrine of the Trinity

is one of the ultimate facts of Christianity which is intimated for the purpose of explaining and accounting for other doctrines, which yet is not itself explained or accounted for. But the doctrine of our Lord's divine nature is expressly revealed, and also explained and illustrated; and is thus explained and accounted for partly by the intimation of the doctrine of the Trinity.

It is obvious that some doctrine must stand as an ultimate, unexplained fact on which side soever our inquiries are directed; because the explanation of one doctrine requires the mention of others that lie as it were beyond it. This observation is equally true in every other branch of science. All of the sciences have, and must have, their ultimate unexplained facts. Astronomy, for example, conducts us to the doctrine of the attraction of gravitation, which must be admitted, although inexplicable, and even in some points of view apparently contrary to reason. If ever that attraction be explained it will be by the discovery or the indication of some other fact, which will then stand as the *ultima thule*, beyond which enterprize cannot push its researches; and which must be received unexplained and unaccounted for. Animal physiology conducts us to the agency of the nerves in moving the muscles, which must be received without explanation: for the manner in which the nerve acts on the muscle, and the manner in which the will acts on the nerve, are subjects hidden in profoundest mystery. If ever it shall be discovered by what means the nerves fulfil their office, it must be by the discovery or the indications of some other fact, (a fact let us suppose connected with electricity or galvanism,) and then that new fact must be received unexplained, and stand as an ultimate fact in physio-

logy. Even pure mathematics are not exempted from obscurity in their extreme questions; but introduce us into speculations respecting the nature of points, lines, surfaces, and solids, the infinite divisibility of space, &c., and involve us in apparently conflicting demonstrations.

Now, what is true in all other branches of knowledge is equally true in religion. It too has, and must have its ultimate facts, which are not, and cannot be explained; unless we could suppose that we are more capable of discovering and comprehending facts respecting God and our souls, than we are of discovering and comprehending facts respecting material substances.—One of these ultimate unexplained facts is the doctrine of the Trinity. Had not this doctrine been intimated, many things revealed respecting our blessed Lord and the Holy Spirit would have been totally destitute of explanation:—they would have stood in the place of the doctrine of the Trinity, as the farthest boundaries of Revelation on one side. Or, if any explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity were given, and we were capable of comprehending it; then that explanation would have involved the intimation of some further facts respecting the divine mind, which new facts would then have been the ultimate unexplained facts of revelation.

The application which I would make of these observations to our present purpose is, that the doctrine of our Lord's divine nature, and that of the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, should be treated separately; that each should be made to stand on its own foundation, or fall for want of foundation. By treating them together, and especially by disposing them after the *synthetic* method; namely, first proving the doctrine of the Trinity, and then proceeding to the doctrine of

our Lord's Divine nature, as if the latter depended on the former, there is great danger of involving the more explicitly and perfectly revealed doctrine in the obscurity of that which is necessarily less clearly and fully revealed.—The *analytical* method—namely, proceeding from particulars to generals—from what is more to what is less perfectly known, is the only just method of conducting any investigation. Theologians seem to have imagined that because the whole of religion is contained in the Bible, a perfect acquaintance with which was, as they imagined, within their reach, they might lay aside the character of inquirers and adopt that of teachers—they might, as persons thoroughly acquainted with the science which they professed to teach, ascend at once to the fountain head, commence with the most comprehensive doctrines, such as the nature of the Deity, the divine decrees, the origin of evil, &c., and thence descend to all the particulars comprehended under these general principles. They would however, I conceive, have acted more wisely had they retained the character of inquirers, and had proceeded from what was most clearly revealed to what was less and less so; till, having reached the utmost verge of revelation, they had confessed that they could proceed no further—that the truths beyond these were among the secret things that belonged to God, and respecting which they would not venture even to surmise. They would thus have left the field of revelation continually open to inquiry; they would have stimulated their pupils to prosecute their research into the book of God, instead of leading them to rest satisfied with the completed system which they had extracted from it; and they would have avoided the danger of involving

their whole system, containing a multitude of most expressly and clearly revealed truths, in all the difficulties of the most obscure parts of it.

In the following pages therefore, I aspire to no higher character than that of an inquirer. I offer myself to my readers not as a teacher, but as a fellow disciple—to lay before them the train of inquiry into the word of God by which I have myself arrived at the conclusions, which I have formed. I shall proceed no further than I find ground in the sacred Scripture to support me; and I ask them to accompany me only so far as they themselves can discern their way, and can find a sure and safe footing. I have no intention of attempting to walk upon the dark sea that lies beyond the limits of revelation; if to any of my readers I shall appear to do so, let them consult their own safety by declining to accompany me. Let them not however give up the research, because I may have pursued a route along which they cannot follow. Let them endeavour to find their own way to a perfect understanding of the truth, looking for the teaching of that good Spirit of God who can make all mysteries plain to them.

In conformity with our proposed method of proceeding from what is most clearly and fully revealed, to that which is less so, I commence with the Redeemer's being a manifestation of the God of heaven in human nature, and proceed then to consider the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, so far as that doctrine is intimated in the word of God, or may be inferred from other doctrines. And here again I would pause for a moment and implore the protection and guidance and blessing of the Lord, both on the writer and reader, and intreat, that, through

the Lord Jesus Christ, he would grant to both a meek and humble and teachable spirit, and would open their understandings more and more to the reception of those glorious truths that are able to make them wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus.

CHAP. IV.

WHAT IS IMPLIED IN THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.

It may perhaps tend to remove some difficulties out of the way of my readers, and prepare them for giving an impartial attention to the words of the sacred record, to consider what is implied in a manifestation of God, and a manifestation of God in human nature. Much I believe of the reluctance that exists in some minds to admit the divine nature and origin of the blessed Jesus, arises from a total misconception of what is meant by his being a manifestation of God. Our author pronounces the very idea to be "gross and heathenish."* It would have better served the cause of truth to explain wherein the grossness or the heathenism of the idea lay, than to offer us an unexplained, unsupported assertion, leaving us to conjecture the meaning of it. The respectable author claims the character of a philosopher; but surely in attempting to answer a question so deep and abstruse as, What would be the most proper mode or form in which the Deity should manifest himself to his creatures? it became him to explain and prove his proposition; nor could any practice be less philosophical than a vague oratorical unsupported assertion introduced on such an occasion. It appears to me that the idea of gross-

* Page 33.

ness which he connects with our doctrine, has its origin entirely in a misapprehension of it; but this he will be better able to determine when I explain what seems to me to be the just and Scriptural views of it.

1. In explaining this point it is necessary to remind my readers of the omnipresence of God. The great God of heaven is present with all his creatures, in all places of the universe. He is wholly and equally present every where. We are apt to conceive of the omnipresence of the Deity, as if he were like some subtile material fluid every where diffused, so that one part of him is in one place, and another part in another place. But God is every where present, not in the sense in which a fluid, every where diffused is present wherever it extends to; but in the sense of being wholly, in all the fulness of all his attributes, in every place. He is wholly *here*, and he is wholly in the most distant parts of creation at the same moment. He does not exist with reference to place. Our ideas of space and place are derived from the imperfection of our nature. One external object is nearer to us than another; but no object is external to the Deity. Instead of saying that he is in every place, it might perhaps be more correct to say that every place is in the Divine mind, and therefore all equally near to him:—as it is written, "*In Him* we live and move and have our being." We may perhaps be enabled to form some more distinct conception of the full and perfect presence of God to all his creatures, by comparing his creatures to the thoughts and imaginations that arise in our own minds. None of these can be said to be farther from us than another, because they are all within the mind itself. So all the

creatures of God throughout the whole universe are, as it were, the creatures of his mind, which live and move and have their being in Him.

This is a mode of existence altogether as mysterious and incomprehensible to us as a plurality of persons in one Divine nature. Yet to suppose that God is present in different places merely in the sense of one part of him being present in one place, and another part of him in another, is to suppose him to consist of parts—to ascribe to him a material extension, and is contrary to every thing that is revealed respecting him.—And I am persuaded that the Rev. author will himself at once admit that this view of the omnipresence of the Deity, incomprehensible as it may appear, is yet the only Scriptural, as well as the only rational or philosophical view of it.

It is thus that the Divine Being is capable of giving the most minute and exact attention to all his creatures at the same moment. The attention which he gives to one object does not in the slightest degree impair the attention which he gives to any other object. An animalcule that can scarcely be discerned by the aid of the most powerful microscope is attended to with as much exactness,—its members formed, its instincts determined, its food provided, its days or its moments numbered, with as much precision as if there were not another creature in the universe besides itself. And the same minute attention is, at the same moment, given to all creatures in every region of the creation. When a man leaves his country and passes to the most distant regions of the earth, he finds himself surrounded with manifestations of the presence of the same God, to whose presence he was accustomed in his native climate—the same wisdom and power and goodness, the same attention given to every,

even the minutest creature; and wherever he goes he may say with Jacob, "Surely God is in this place." If he could pass from this globe to the most distant planet or star, he would find himself still within the embrace of the same God, possessing the same character and attributes, the same infinite skill, the same love of order, the same wisdom, the same goodness, and giving the same minute exact attention to every object.—The manifestations would be different, accommodated to different circumstances; but the invisible being who was manifested in them, would be plainly and obviously, to the eye and the understanding, the same God.

From this it follows that any manifestation of God in one place, or to any one individual or class of his creatures, does not imply that he is absent from any other place or class of his creatures; or that he may not, at the same moment, be manifesting himself to other creatures according to their circumstances. For example, the angel who appeared to Joshua, as recorded Jos. v. 13. vi. 2., it is probable was Jehovah himself, manifesting himself in the form of an angel or messenger: for he seems to be the same person who is afterwards called Jehovah; (ch. vi. 2.) and yet Jehovah was doubtless at the same time manifest in the glory that rested on the mercy seat in the Tabernacle, ready to hear and to answer the petitions of any humble worshipper who might present himself before that "throne of grace:" although that worshipper would be totally ignorant that the same Jehovah was, at the same moment, made manifest in another form to Joshua. I do not offer this as an argument, but merely as an illustration of my meaning; for I am aware that it may be disputed whether it was Jehovah that appeared at this

time to Joshua. But it is obvious that if God may, consistently with his nature and attributes, manifest himself under any form to any of his creatures, being every where present, he may manifest himself to all of them, or to any number of them, separately or together, at the same moment, and in whatever form may be suited to their circumstances. The eternal Word of God, who was with God, and who was God, whom we believe to have manifested the Deity in human nature, might for example, be conducting such a dispensation as his mediatorial kingdom in this planet, and at the same time conducting some dispensation equally minute in its details, marked by the same wisdom and goodness and grace, accompanied with manifestations of the same power and the same love, in the most remote regions of the universe. And the attention which he is giving to one class of his creatures here, would not in the slightest degree impair the attention which he may be giving to another class of them in those far distant orbs. Each class, and every individual of each class, would necessarily be attended to with as much exactness as if there were no other creatures in the universe besides.

2. The subject therefore presented to us for consideration is what particular manifestation of the Deity is, to be regarded as most consistent with any ascertained known facts, or with the character of the Deity. This is a question on which I confess myself altogether incompetent to form any judgment whatever. Common sense, reason, philosophy, &c. seem to me to be struck dumb before such a question. Whether the Deity shall choose to manifest his presence to the senses of his creatures in angelic or in human

form, or in a flame of fire, or in an audible voice; or whether he shall manifest himself directly to their minds without the intervention of their senses, as in a vision, or a dream, or a trance, is a subject on which I dare not form a conjecture.

Our author pronounces a manifestation of God in human nature to be gross and heathenish. On what grounds is such a sentence thus given forth as *ex cathedra?*

Is it that a manifestation of God by means of matter would have any thing in it of grossness or pollution? I know that the ancient Gnostics imagined that matter was in its very nature polluted, and that therefore they consistently ascribed the creation of it, not to God, but to an evil principle—to Satan. But the idea that any grossness or pollution is attached to matter has long been banished from all sound philosophy, as an ignorant prejudice. Matter is in its nature, so far as we know it, as pure and free from grossness or pollution as spirit. It is merely a different creature of God, vested with different properties. Dr. Priestly and other philosophers of a similar class will scarcely admit even this, but conceive so highly of the qualities of matter as to verge towards the opinion that the mind itself is material. I do not recollect hearing of any one objecting, on the score of grossness or pollution, to those manifestations which God made of himself under the Old Testament dispensation:—as, for example to Moses, in a flame of fire;* or on Sinai to all the Israelites, in thunder and lightning and smoke and devouring flame;† or on these and other occasions in an articulate voice,

* Exod. iii. † Exod. xix. and xx.

or, as in the tabernacle and temple in a cloud.* Yet these were manifestations of himself through the medium of matter. I know not if any one would venture to pronounce the manifestation of God described in Exod. xxiv. 9—11, 16, 17. gross and polluted:—"Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy ral of the elders of Israel. And they saw the God of Israel and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven, in its clearness, and upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand; also they saw God and did eat and drink."—"And the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days.—And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." Neither do I know that any one has stigmatized that living voice by which the invisible God bore testimony to his well beloved Son on three different occasions,† as gross and heathenish. Yet these were all manifestations of the Deity to the senses of men, and consequently through a material medium.

Is there then any grossness or pollutedness in the human form? A supposition to that effect must be derived from the moral corruption of human nature; for in itself, surely the human form is as pure and free from pollution, as worthy of being used in a manifestation of the Deity, as the appearance of a flame of fire, or the sound of human language, or any other modification of matter. Our author asserts that "no Jew could ever be guilty of entertaining the gross

* See besides the passages already referred to, Exod. xvi. 10. xxxiii. 18—23. 1 Kings viii. 10, 11, xix. 11—15.

† Mat. iii. 17. xvii. 5.; John xii. 28.

and heathenish idea, that the Almighty had revealed himself in a human form, and was come to sojourn among men." The Jews were familiar with manifestations of God to the senses of men; and it would be difficult to discover the greater grossness of one material manifestation of himself than of another. But a manifestation of God in human form could not be so strange a thing as our author seems to imagine. It would appear that, in the intercourse which God held with our first parents in the days of their innocency, he came to them in this form. This is not expressly asserted, but it seems to be implied in the words of Gen. iii. 8. "They" (Adam and Eve) "heard the voice of the Lord God *walking* in the garden in the cool of the day." By the voice, seems here to be meant the sound of his footsteps; for the word is frequently used for sound in general. There is one unequivocal instance of the manifestation of God in human form in Gen. xviii. 1, 2. "And the Lord appeared unto him" (Abraham) "in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. And he lift up his eyes and looked and lo three men stood by him." One of the these persons, as appears afterwards, was a manifestation of the Deity himself in human form; the other two were angels, whom he sent forward to Sodom. The person with whom Abraham conversed respecting the destruction of Sodom—with whom he interceded in behalf of that guilty people, is called throughout the narrative, JEHOVAH; and he spoke as if he had independent authority to do what he thought fit. The two angels who attended on him seem to have gone on towards Sodom, while THE LORD, that is JEHOVAH,* remained with

* It may be proper to inform the English reader that

Abraham and came thither at even. And when he who is called the LORD or JEHOVAH had done communing with Abraham it is said (verse 33.) "that he went his way," an expression that seems plainly to indicate that he had assumed a human form in manifesting himself to Abraham. The Lord seems to have appeared to Jacob also in the same form as appears from Gen. xxxii. 24—30. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved."

Does it appear strange or incredible that the great God of the universe should thus manifest himself in human form and converse with any of his creatures? Why should it be incredible? "The ways of God are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts." When we think of a manifestation of the Deity, we are apt to conconceive of some brilliant, dazzling, terrific display of what we call majesty. But such conceptions flow from our carnality. When the Lord sees it to be necessary, he can array himself in terror, as he did on mount Sinai; but when he holds intercourse with his holy, beloved creatures, why should he not assume a form which is least calculated to alarm them? I cannot conceive of a more beautiful or appropriate manifestation of himself to such creatures than in their own form, speaking to them in their own language, and thus conveying to them by means of symbols with which they were familiar, impressions of

when the word LORD is printed in capitals in our authorised version, it represents the word JEHOVAH in the original Hebrew; but that when it is printed in the small Roman letters, 'lord,' or 'Lord,' it represents a word that signifies a ruler or master.—See Ps. cx. 1.

grace and condescension, and yet of power and authority. The fastidious imaginations of blinded men may take offence at the descriptions which are given of the Deity in the Scripture, by reference to the members of the human body; as when it speaks of his eye, his hand, his feet, nay his heart, and his bowels. But this language is adopted in condescension to our weakness; and why might not the merciful God with the same condescension, and for the same purposes, actually manifest himself to his holy and obedient creatures in that very form by reference to which he directed that he should be described to them? It may, for ought we know, be a general law in the manifestations of the Deity to his rational and moral creatures, in all regions of the universe, who have not rendered themselves unworthy of such condescension by sin, that he appear to them as one of themselves;—their superior indeed, their Father and their Lord, but still, gracious and meek and gentle among them, permitting them to approach him even as children to their father, to pour the expressions of their love into his bosom, and to present to him all their requests.

But our author asserts that the idea of a manifestation of the Deity in human form is *heathenish*, as well as *gross*. He probably here alludes to the ideas of the heathen, that the Gods existed in the form of men and women. Even if these views of Divine manifestations tallied exactly with the notions of the heathen, that circumstance would not prove them to be erroneous. The heathen may have derived their ideas by tradition from Adam and from Abraham. The various forms of heathen idolatry bear the same relation to the Patriarchal religion, transmitted by Noah to his posterity, as the superstitions of

the Jews bear to the Mosaic dispensation, and as the idolatries of the Church of Rome bear to the Christian dispensation. To argue from the corrupted religion of the heathen, against the revelation of God given in the earlier parts of the Old Testament, is to follow the example of the French deists, in arguing from the corruptions of the Church of Rome, against the truth of Christianity, as taught by Jesus and his apostles.

But the truth is, that the views of the manifestations of the Deity in human form held out in Scripture, are essentially different from the notions of the heathen respecting the human form of their gods. Their notions were not of a mere manifestation of one supreme God who fills earth and heaven; but of the permanent existence of their gods in human form, altogether independently of their manifesting themselves to mankind. Their gods were a sort of community of men and women; who, when they were present in one place, were absent from all others; who occasionally visited the earth, but whose ordinary place of residence was in some elevated situation above the earth. In their notions of their gods they could find room for multitudes of them in the universe. "They had lords many, and gods many." But the views held out in Scripture of the manifestations of God were simply *manifestations* of a being who has no form, who is alike in every place, and who merely makes his existence sensible, according to whatever mode his purposes may demand. His manifestations of himself may be by a voice or sound, they may be by a flame of fire, they may be in a dream or trance, or they may be in a visible human form.

But the grossness of the conceptions which the

heathen formed of their gods consisted chiefly in the grossly polluted moral character which they ascribed to them. Their gods were animated by the most detestable passions, and stained with the most atrocious wickedness. They were, as I have already observed, a community of men and women; and they were such a community living in the most dissolute and abominable practices. Here was a real *grossness.* Here was what might emphatically be called *heathenish.* But the manifestations of the Deity recorded in Scripture, although he is represented as making use of a material medium, and sometimes even of the human form, have no speck or stain of sin upon them—no real grossness; they retain the unity, the universal presence of God, and are vested with such attributes and moral character as is befitting the great Sovereign of the universe.

We must not however forget that the manifestation of the Deity, which we believe to have been given in the Lord Jesus, was not in human form merely, but in human nature—a human body and soul.

With regard to the body of the Lord Jesus, there is nothing more gross in the matter of which a human body is formed, than there is in flame or light, or in air by means of which sound is conveyed. Nor is there any thing less worthy of God in his condescending to inhabit a human body, than in a manifestation of himself dwelling within the curtains of a tent or tabernacle. The human frame is a building of more exquisite beauty and value, than even Solomon's temple, with all the magnificence of its architecture, and all its profusion of gold and costly workmanship.

But the manifestation of the Deity in Christ Jesus was not merely in a human body, but in

the characters and attributes of a human soul. In truth no manifestation is made to us of God in a human form, even if we see him in Christ Jesus: for we have never seen the outward form of Jesus, nor has any description of his appearance been left upon record. All that we know of him is his character as manifested in his acts. He appears to us in the wisdom, the power, the holiness, the justice, the meekness, the gentleness, the condescension, the goodness, the love, and the mercy, that shone forth in his whole deportment. And, so far from discovering any thing gross in such a manifestation of the Deity, I confess it appears to me to be the most pure and spiritual that it is possible to conceive. The Jews were offended with him because he was not sufficiently terrific in his appearance. Had he come in flaming fire, with the sound of a trumpet, and surrounded with thunderings and lightnings; they would have prostrated themselves before him in lowliest adoration. But they could not relish the spiritual glories which he manifested, in the transcendent beauty and dignity of his character. Yet, O, what a delightful thing it were to know and to be assured, that the meek and lowly Jesus, vested as he was with power to protect his people, and to supply all their wants, but kind, condescending, compassionate, gentle, permitting his disciples to address him, not indeed with undue familiarity, but without fear, to lean on his bosom, and to tell him their wants and their desires, was no other than a manifestation of the great God of heaven in human nature; and that the dispositions which he exhibited while he was in the world, towards those with whom he associated, were none other than a manifestation of the dispositions of the invisible God towards our poor ruined guilty race.

And he who is prepared to admire the manifestations of God recorded in the Old Testament in clouds and fire and terrific voices, while he is offended with the more spiritual manifestation that is given of him in the character of the blessed Redeemer, is still labouring under the influence of that materialism, from which, with the aid of his philosophy falsely so called, he has been in vain endeavouring to emancipate himself.

Does any one ask, how the Deity could so unite himself to the man Christ Jesus that the character manifested by him should be a manifestation of the character of the Deity; I answer that I do not know. Neither know I how the Deity so united himself to the flaming fire in the bush, or the glory that appeared on mount Sinai, and that rested on the tabernacle, that the movements of these appearances and the voices that issued from them, could be regarded as a manifestation of the character of God. I cannot explain how the human soul is so united to the body, that the acts of the body may be regarded as the acts of the soul; and that the motions and gestures of the body should be a manifestation of the tempers and passions of the soul. When I see a man's eye flash, and his teeth set, I know his soul is angry; and when I see his face smile, I know that his soul is pleased. But how such drawing and contracting of muscles should carry home to my bosom an instantaneous impression of the feelings or tempers of an immaterial soul, is altogether beyond my comprehension. Nevertheless I have no doubt of the facts. So, although I cannot explain how the divine nature could be so united to the human, that the tempers and dispositions of the man, should be an expression of the character and dispositions of God; I

should never regard my inability to explain such a fact, as a reason for discrediting it, provided it be established by sufficient evidence. All that I expect of my readers at present is, not to permit their minds to be shut against evidence, by our confessed inability to explain a fact, that is not more inexplicable than a thousand facts that are believed without hesitation; but to proceed to the examination of the evidence without bias or prejudice against it.

3. I proceed further to observe, that one of the most formidable prejudices against the Saviour's being a manifestation of God in human nature arises from his humiliation to suffering and death. Thus our author, alluding to the words of the apostle Paul in Philip. ii. 6. says, "What ideas can they have of the Deity who suppose that he could make himself of no reputation, or divest himself of his glory? The thing is impossible. We might as well suppose that he could cease to exist."* But the cause of his being offended with this doctrine arises wholly, I apprehend, from his mode of conceiving of it, and not from the doctrine itself, properly understood. He obviously imagines, that in making himself of no reputation, God must have descended from his sovereignty of the universe; that a temporary obscuration of his sovereign authority, and of the worship which was paid to him, must have taken place; and, in short, that the Deity, so long as he was thus of no reputation, could not appear in his glory and majesty to any of his creatures throughout the whole universe. But as this could never be, so neither do the Scripture expressions, even when understood as referring to

* Page 22.

the Deity, imply such a general obscuration of the Divine glory. The whole has reference to the manifestation of himself to mankind—the station which he assumed in his intercourse with men. He condescended to manifest himself to them in a lowly guise, divested of the insignia of power and authority, in such a manner that *they* held him in no reputation. He condescended to appear among them as a servant or subject, manifested himself in their nature, so uniting himself to a body and a soul, that the man Christ Jesus was as truly a manifestation of God, as any of those manifestations which he made of himself under the Old Testament dispensation; while yet it was still of a more lowly external character, so much so "that he was despised and rejected of men." "He came to his own, and his own received him not." The humiliation of himself might be exhibited in the sight of the whole rational and moral universe; yet it did not affect the relation in which he stood to any of them: it was merely his gracious and condescending mode of dealing with a lost and obdurate race, for the purpose of recovering them, and regaining their alienated affections. The angels of God witnessed his descent, yet he was not divested of glory in their eyes; for they waited on him with the most profound reverence when he was at the very depth of his voluntary humiliation: and probably there never was a period in their existence at which he appeared to them more transcendently glorious, than when he was permitting himself to be treated with contempt and outrage by his own wayward frantic children.

I shall endeavour to illustrate this subject a little further by reference to the manifestations of God under the Jewish dispensation. The

most ordinary manifestation of the Deity under that dispensation, was the appearance of cloud and fire that went before the Israelites in their march from Egypt, that appeared on the top of mount Sinai, and that afterwards rested on the mercy seat in the tabernacle, and subsequently in the temple. This seems to have been the same that was made to Moses in the burning bush, and long after, in vision, to Isaiah and Ezekiel. This manifestation of the Deity was defended from every undue freedom by the most solemn sanctions. When the Deity thus appeared to Moses, he commanded him to stand at a distance, and to put his shoes off his feet. When he appeared by this symbol to the people upon mount Sinai, they were forbidden to draw nigh to the mount, or to break through to gaze, on the penalty of instant death. If even a beast should touch the mountain it was to be stoned or thrust through with a dart. When afterwards that glory of the Lord took up its residence in the most holy place in the tabernacle, the approach to him was restricted to the high priest, and that only once in the year. When Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, presented themselves before the altar of incense with strange fire in their censers, they were instantly devoured by fire that came out from the presence of the Lord. When Korah and his company of Levites presumed to present themselves, uncalled, unauthorised, to officiate as priests before that manifestation of the glory of the Lord, they too were destroyed by fire that came forth from his presence. When, in an after age, the ark was taken by the Philistines, they were forced to restore it by plagues that were inflicted upon them; and when the Israelites, on regaining possession of it, ventured only to look into it, they were struck dead

to the number of fifty thousand and seventy men. When, on a still later occasion, David was conducting the ark to the place prepared for it, and had for that purpose put it upon a new cart, contrary as it would seem to the instructions given in the law for conveying it from place to place, and Uzzah put forth his hand to take hold of it because the motion of the cart shook it, the Lord resented Uzzah's presumption and undue familiarity, by smiting him dead to the earth. And when king Uzziah attempted to intrude himself into the priest's office, by entering the sanctuary in the temple with a censer, for the purpose of burning incense upon the altar that stood before the veil of the Holy of Holies, within which the glory of the Lord rested on the mercy-seat, he was smitten with leprosy and continued a leper till his death. In these instances, the Lord was maintaining the majesty and unapproachable sanctity of his character, by protecting the manifestations of his presence from liberties and familiarities that would have tended, had they not been checked, to grow into contempt.

Now let me suppose that the Jews had become, at any time, so outrageous in their rebellion against God, as to treat that manifestation of his presence with the most marked contempt—that they had risen up in fury against the tabernacle, that they had penetrated into the most holy place, and, unawed by the mysterious cloud that rested on the mercy-seat, had dragged forth the ark, and had torn it to pieces, and spat upon it, and trampled it under foot,—that they had broken the tables of stone which they found there, and had burnt the budding rod of Aaron, and scattered the pot of Manna that was laid up there, and destroyed the book of the law; and let me suppose that God, instead of hurling upon them

the vengeance which their audacious wickedness deserved, had continued to bear with them,—had by his servants intreated them to desist for their own sakes, and warned them of the consequences that must overtake them if they persisted in their rebellion; and, when they were proceeding to the utmost extremities in their malignant rage, had directed his prophets and priests still to pray for them, for that they knew not what they did; would not this be humbling himself in the sight of all his creatures who were capable of witnessing the scene? would it not be making himself of no reputation among his rebelling people, divesting himself of the wonted majesty of his deportment among them, and assuming a most humble guise?

Now, this is precisely what we believe he has done in Christ Jesus; but with this difference, that in Jesus, the manifestation of the presence of the Lord was no inanimate object, which could be treated merely with outward marks of disrespect, but was incapable of suffering. In Jesus, the manifestation of God was a human soul, and body capable of mental and corporeal anguish—a man, who could be insulted, scourged, murdered. The Lord Jesus came among men manifesting the attributes and character of Jehovah, speaking the words, and doing the works of God. The manifestation of the Deity was in him infinitely more perfect, than in the cloud of glory that dwelt within the curtains of the tabernacle. His body was the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, and was of more exquisite workmanship than the scarlet and fine linen and gold and embroidery of the Jewish tabernacle; and his soul was an infinitely more glorious shechinah—an infinitely more perfect image or manifestation of the invisible God, than that

cloud of smoke, or that dazzling brightness, by which his presence was then manifested. But the people did not regard him. "He came to his own, and his own received him not."—"He was despised and rejected of men." They insulted him. They derided him. They scourged him. They spat upon him. They at length crucified him, and mocked him in the agonies of death. And, in the mean while, he bore with their outrages. His disciples suggested to him to call fire from heaven to consume those who rejected him; but he would not. He stood silent amidst their insults. "He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: and hid not his face from shame and spitting." "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he opened not his mouth." When they were piercing his hands and his feet—driving their iron spikes into these most sensitive parts of his body, that they might lift him up to the mockery of the ferocious multitude, he prayed for them, saying—"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

If this was indeed, as the centurion pronounced him to be, "The Son of God," one in nature with the Deity, as every son is of the same nature with his father; if he was God manifest in the flesh, was it not a manifestation of God placing himself in a situation in which his creatures held him in no estimation, divesting himself for a moment of the glory of his power, and his authority to protect himself from insolence and contempt, and of that royal state which belongs to him as the Sovereign of the universe? And yet is there any thing gross or heathenish in this? Is there any thing in it more difficult to comprehend than in his permitting men to

trample his law and authority under foot, and to perpetrate the most detestable crimes in his sight, without instantly sweeping them away in his indignation? Is there not rather here, every feature of the most gracious forbearance and condescension—of a compassion and love that pass all understanding?

Our author affects to be shocked at the idea of the death of God. "The Unitarian," says he, "dares not venture to suppose it; for the death and burial of God would be a most revolting idea." * But does he really imagine that any man ever entertained so preposterous a notion? We know that in death, even the soul of man does not die. "The dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns unto God who gave it." No one ever thinks of the death and burial of the soul; and how could any person be so absurd as to imagine the death and burial of the Deity. Does the author say that then it was only the *man* Christ Jesus that died. I ask is it only the body that dies, because it is the body only that is buried? Is not the soul involved in the death of the man as well as the body?—We know that the Deity cannot suffer pain, neither can the mere body of man. We know that the Deity cannot die nor be buried nor corrupt in the grave, neither can the soul of man. Yet we know that both the body and the soul of man are involved in the sentence of death that is executed on man. So the Deity was *morally* involved in the death of the Lord Jesus. The insult was offered to him; the blow was aimed at him; and the forbearance and humility in submitting to such an outrage were manifested by him.

* Page 37.

O that men, instead of cavilling at these astonishing displays of the condescension and love of the Great God, even to the most guilty of his creatures, would be persuaded to look and wonder, and adore; and to cast themselves into the arms of a parent, who pours forth all the tenderness of his affection to allure them back to his home and his bosom. But if they shall neglect such manifestations of goodness and mercy —if they shall despise this sacrifice which has been made for sin; what can they expect but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and their portion in that fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.

We have however hitherto been taking it for granted, that the Blessed Jesus was God manifest in the flesh; and have been only explaining what we should understand by such a manifestation of God. We have yet to examine the Scriptures to find whether Jesus was really God manifest in the flesh; and all that I have expected to accomplish by the explanations given in this chapter, is to remove such prejudices as might prevent my readers from attending to the intimations of Scripture with teachableness and candour.

CHAP. V.

JESUS CHRIST DECLARED TO BE GOD.

We now come to the direct examination of Scripture, for the purpose of discovering what the Spirit of God has revealed, respecting the person of the Lord Jesus.

And I shall introduce this department of our work by conceding, that if the Divine nature of the Blessed Jesus were intimated in but one or two insulated texts; if these intimations were altogether unsupported by corresponding intimations respecting him; if, in every other view given of him, he appeared as a mere man, or superior to man, but still a creature; I should be disposed, at least if it were possible on any fair principle of criticism, to understand these one or two insulated passages which seemed to declare him to be God, in some figurative sense. For if it be true that the Lord Jesus was indeed God manifested in the flesh, it may be expected that so wonderful an event as the manifestation of God in human nature, nay as a poor despised man, will be more fully developed than by a bare intimation of it. But if I find in Scripture not only explicit intimations that Jesus was God appearing in the garb of humanity; but that these intimations are supported in a great variety of particulars; that names, titles, attributes and

works of God are ascribed to him; that a worship and service are claimed for him, which, unless he were God, would be rank idolatry, I cannot refrain from receiving the fact thus so plainly revealed, without relinquishing my belief of the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures.

Is Jesus Christ really called GOD? If he be so even in a single instance, it is extraordinary in a book which so strongly condemns idolatry—in the only book in the world from which we could learn the evil of idolatry. It is pleaded that the word *God* is used in an inferior sense, namely, to signify judges or magistrates. But there must be some distinction in the use of the word when it is employed in this inferior sense, else it might be inferred that no God is revealed in the Bible, but merely magistrates. The truth is, that there is no more difficulty in determining when the Hebrew word is used in its supreme or subordinate sense, than in determining when our word *Lord* signifies the supreme God or some officer in the state. If any man speak of the *Lords*, or of *Lord so and so*, adding some title, or of the *learned* or *noble Lord*, no one imagines that he speaks of the great God; but if he say simply '*The Lord*,' especially if it be in connexion with a religious subject, every one who hears him instantly understands that he speaks of the Creator. The supposed ambiguity of the Hebrew word is in fact nothing, no one is ever in doubt about the application of it. With regard to the Greek word rendered *God*, used in the New Testament, there is no ambiguity whatever attached to it. When it is used plurally, or when a specific title is annexed to it, like our own word *God*, it is employed to designate the false gods of the heathen. But the appellation, GOD, without such limitation or explanation,

whether with or without the article, is never used in any sense but one, and that is to designate the supreme, eternal God. Nor is there a single instance in the whole New Testament of that title being given to any mere man or angel, unless our Blessed Lord be so. No individual apostle, or prophet, or king, or judge is ever distinguished by that title; but it is most sacredly appropriated to the one living and true God. It occurs upwards of 1500 times in the New Testament, in all of which its signification is perfectly uniform.

Is then this title given to the Lord Jesus Christ? I must refer the reader for an answer to the following passages of Scripture, with the observations upon them:—

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."* Nothing can be more express than this. That by the Word is meant Jesus, in his original nature, before he 'came down from heaven,' is manifest; because it is said that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Then it is said of that Word, that he was with God, and that he was God. This is the plain import of the words requiring no ingenuity to discover it.—Nor does our author, or any other Unitarian writer pretend that they will not bear this sense; although some of them have, with much ingenuity, attempted to prove that they may possibly be capable of another sense. Let us now see what our author says respecting this passage.

* John i. 1. 14.

" Waiving any discussion relative to the different senses of the term *beginning;* or to the absence of the Greek article before Θεος (*Theos,*) he (the author) thinks the verse may be clearly understood on Unitarian principles, without any difficulty. By 'the word,' or λογος (*logos*) he understands, with many able and learned expositors, the divine wisdom, an essential attribute of Deity, here personified by the Evangelist, as by Solomon in the book of Proverbs, where she is introduced, saying, 'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was—I was by him as one brought up with him.'—Prov. viii. 22, 23, 30. John affirms that the *logos,* or wisdom existed from the beginning—or from all eternity, that it dwelt with God; nay, that it was God himself; that all things (all things probably relative to the Christian dispensation) were done by or through its influence. It is displayed in all the works of creation, and in all the communications of grace, but eminently so in the person, character, and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. " The word became flesh." The wisdom of the most High, spake by the mouth of man. The Evangelist no where affirms that the eternal God became incarnate; or if he does—it is where he says, 'If we love one another God dwelleth in us.'—1 John iv. 12. This is just as strong a text in proof that God becomes incarnate in every pious man, as any in all revelation, that he was incarnate in the person of our Lord. Other attributes, besides wisdom, are spoken of in a similar style in the sacred writers, and particularly in John.—Thus it is written God is love—God is truth—God is light, i. e. knowledge, omniscience. We might convert each of these propositions, after the manner of John, and say, love is God—truth is God—light is God, with as much propriety as he says the Word was God. But who would dream of making each of these attributes a person distinct from the great Being, to whom alone they inherently belong? Of

each of them also it might be predicated, as well as of the 'Word,' that it became flesh—for each of them was equally manifested in the actions and discourses of our Saviour. But to attribute personality to the Word; and then to affirm that the person meant is Christ, and that Christ was God, and *with* God, forms a proposition rather too profound to be fathomed by the line and the plummet of a common understanding. If to render it less unfathomable, it be affirmed that by any one of the Gods is meant God the Son, and by the other, God the Father, the Unitarian demands such reasons for this explanation as ought to satisfy a reader of common sense, who is ignorant of Cabbalistic philosophy, and when such reasons are given, he will insist farther on knowing by what principle, one part of revelation is made to overthrow another: and wherefore the first verse of St. John is interpreted in such a way, as to contradict the positive declaration of Jehovah himself, that *with* him there is no God. '*I*, even *I*, am he, and there is no God *with* me.'—Deuter. xxxii. 39.; neither is there any God *besides* him. "The Lord he is God; there is none else besides him."—iv. 35. "Is there a God besides me? Yea there is no God; I KNOW not *any*."—Is. xliv. 8.*

Our author claims some credit for waiving any discussion respecting the different senses of the term *beginning* and also of the title *God;* for his language in his first edition is, "Waiving any advantage that he might derive from a critical investigation," &c. But the fact is that he here alludes to an interpretation of the whole text totally inconsistent with that which he has adopted; and he has of course selected that which seemed to him the just one. The other interpretation is adopted by Dr. Bruce, who feels no difficulty in applying the passage to our

* Page 42, 44, Ed. 2d

Lord. "The Word was God," was says he, "a celestial being, and was with God in the beginning." Here he understands the word God, on its first occurrence in an inferior sense, to designate a creature, and on its second occurrence, in its highest sense, to designate the Creator. And of course he takes a limited view of the term *beginning*. Our author however asserts that by "*the Word*," John did not mean a person, but the attribute of wisdom in the Deity; that by *God* in both occurrences, is meant the supreme God: and demands reasons for understanding it of God the Son in the one case, and of God the Father in the other. By the phrase *in the beginning* he understands from eternity; because the wisdom of God must necessarily have been with him from eternity. We may therefore leave Dr. Bruce's interpretation in the hands of Dr. Drummond. In doing so however, I shall to Dr. Drummond's questions add another, namely, can Dr. Bruce find another instance in the whole of the New Testament of the title *God*, in the singular number, being used to designate any creature, without the addition of such a limitation as clearly marks the meaning of the inspired writer? "The God of this world," "Your God Remphan," "Gods many," &c. are not cases in point. The word God is there limited by the terms with which it is connected. The English word God may be applied in the same manner. The gods of the heathen, the god Jupiter, &c. are common phrases; and yet would any one misunderstand the meaning of the assertion, 'Christ is God.' To say, Christ is a God, would be to assert that he is a false deity, one among a number. The absence of the article in Greek has no such force as the addition of the indefinite article in English, which is the word '*one*' nearly in its original

form, and implies that there are others besides that which is mentioned. The absence of the Greek article merely determines that it is the predicate, and not the subject of the proposition, and therefore precludes the inversion which our author proposes on other passages. Doctor Bruce refers to the phrase, "see I have made thee a god to Pharaoh."* But this also is limited by the addition of the words 'to Pharaoh,' and would perhaps be better rendered, "See I have made thee God to Pharaoh;" there being no article in the Hebrew having the force of our indefinite article: and it is explained in a previous passage referring to the same arrangement, "He (i. e. Aaron) shall be to thee *instead* of a mouth; and thou shalt be to him *instead* of God."† That cause must be desperate which is content to grasp at straws such as these.

But leaving Dr. Bruce's interpretation to the decision of his brother Unitarian, let us attend to the interpretation which our author proposes.

In the first place he asserts that the passage does not relate to our Lord, but that John commences his history of Jesus with a poetical personification of the Divine attribute of wisdom.—As the most effectual refutation of this hypothesis, I would recommend to my readers to peruse attentively the whole of the first chapter of the Gospel by John, keeping in mind that they are reading the introduction to a history of our Lord in *prose*, marked by unusual simplicity of diction. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. And the Word was God: the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; in

* Exod. vii. 1. † Exod. iv. 16.

him was life, and the life was the *light* of men. That was the true *light*, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own and his own received him not. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.—John bare witness of him and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me: and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."* It is surely not wonderful that Dr. Bruce and the authors of the Unitarian version of the New Testament, with I believe almost all Unitarian writers, should, on the perusal of such declarations as these, admit that by "*the Word*," is meant Jesus Christ. Our author should certainly feel himself bound to give an explanation of all these expressions, and of others in the same chapter, before he can reasonably expect that any one should adopt his hypothesis that by *the Word*, is not meant Jesus Christ.

Our author says that by the term, "Word," he understands the Divine attribute of wisdom. Can he produce a single instance in the whole Scripture of the use of the word *logos* in this sense, or a single instance in the Septuagint of the Greek word *logos* employed to translate the Hebrew word which is used to express the Divine

* John i. 1, 4, 9—11, 14—18.

attribute of wisdom? How can he expect that we should admit a meaning ascribed to a word, of which he does not furnish us with one solitary example?

He refers us to the poetical description of Wisdom in Prov. viii. There, however, the word used in the Septuagint is not *logos* but *sophia.* It is not improbable that, in this personification of wisdom, there may be a reference to the Lord Jesus; that is, that Jesus as a divine person may be described, or at least alluded to in the personification. Making every allowance for the bold figures admitted into lyric poetry, not merely in the east, but in all regions of the earth, it is difficult to conceive how some of the expressions used by Solomon are applicable to a mere attribute. For example—"When he prepared the heavens I was there; then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."* I would not assert that, in the bold spirit of lyric poetry, such language might not be used with regard to a Divine attribute; but to imagine that any writer of a simple prose narrative, should commence his narrative with a personification which it is difficult to conceive of being admitted into the loftiest flights of poetical composition, and that in such a personification a word should be employed in a sense of which there is not a single example in the whole Scripture, is an outrage on all legitimate criticism.

But this meaning of the word *logos* is adopted, not only in the absence of any example of its

* Prov. viii. 27—30, 31.

bearing such a meaning, but in opposition to the unequivocal use of it by this apostle, as a title of our blessed Lord. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called, the Word of God."*

With the remainder of our author's criticism it will not be necessary to detain the reader long. Having thus satisfied himself that the word *logos* signifies the attribute of wisdom; he next tells us, that that attribute is displayed "in all the works of creation, and in all the communications of grace, but eminently so in the person, character and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ:" which, I suppose, is his explanation of the expressions, "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came to his own, and his own received him not." By the Word being made flesh, he understands, "The wisdom of the most High, spake by the mouth of man," and referring to 1 John iv. 12., "if we love one another *God dwelleth in us*," he asserts that this is just as strong a text in proof that God becomes incarnate in every pious man, as any in all revelation, that he was incarnate in the person of our Lord. It is however no where said in Scripture, with reference to any individual, that God was made

* Rev. xix. 11—13.

flesh by dwelling in him. Nor does this text offer any explanation of a Divine attribute being made flesh, which is a form of expression unheard of, and, as a manner of stating the simple truth, that the wisdom of God spoke by a prophet, is as forced and unnatural as can well be conceived. The Divine wisdom spoke by all the prophets and apostles; and yet of none of them is it said, that it was made flesh in them. Besides, if by "the Word" is not meant the Lord Jesus, where does our author find the reference to Jesus at all?

Let us however suppose these difficulties got over, and this point conceded, and what then? What of, "The Word was God?" Why, then, our author goes on to tell us that this apostle elsewhere says, "God is love, God is truth, God is light; and that he might have said, (although he does not) God is wisdom." Well, suppose him to have said so, and what next? Why, in the next place, he might have said, (although he does not) love is God, truth is God, light is God, and consequently he might also have said, wisdom is God; and this he adds, would have been in his own style; although there is neither in his writings, nor in any other part of Scripture a proposition so monstrous. "We might convert," says he, "each of these propositions, after the manner of John, and say, love is God, &c. *with as much propriety,*" (mark his words) "as he" (speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost) "says the Word was God." It so happens however that these sentences are not capable of this inversion. The Greek language, more precise in this than ours, determines, by the use of the article, which noun is the subject, and which is the predicate of the proposition.—

But this difficulty surmounted, we are still only at the proposition, "Wisdom is God;" whereas that of the Evangelist is, "The Word was God." Our author gives us no reason for the change of the past into the present tense, which, in the statement of a truth such as that, God is wise, would be very extraordinary. He however informs us in another passage, on the authority of Wakefield, that the peculiar use of the present tense for the past, is to imply determination and certainty; and, by parity of reason, I should suppose, that the use of the past for the present, is to imply indetermination and uncertainty: so that, after this laborious journey, we have at last reached the conclusion, that wisdom *is*, but with indetermination and uncertainty, God. And this our author calls explaining a text on Unitarian principles. To arrive at this interpretation, if interpretation that can be called which reduces the passage to as unmeaning a succession of propositions as can well be conceived, and to which there is nothing that bears any resemblance in the whole Bible; we must receive, not one, but successively seven of the most extravagant suppositions which have ever been resorted to in cases of the utmost emergency. "In the beginning was wisdom, and wisdom was with God, and wisdom is God." Let the author distinctly state the difference of sense between these two last propositions— "wisdom was with God, and wisdom is God," or acknowledge that he conceives the apostle to have written an unmeaning tautology.

The latter part of the criticism is founded on fallacies which have already been exposed, namely, first, that "the plummet of a common understanding" is the standard of truth, so that whatever it cannot "fathom" must be false: and,

secondly, that by believing Jesus to be God, and with God, we believe that there are two Gods. It also implies that we conceive that by the word *God*, on its first occurrence, is meant God the Father, and on its second occurrence, God the Son. This however is not at all necessary, although instances of such changes in the use of words sometimes occur; as doubtless Dr. Bruce will be prepared to convince our author, since he not only believes that such a change takes place here, but also supposes that in the one case the word is used in its proper sense, God Almighty, and in the other in an inferior sense, to signify merely a celestial being. But let it be remembered, that the word *God* is not a proper name, but a title denoting the dignity, character and station, if I may so speak, of the Supreme Being. It may be compared to our word, King, not the name of the individual who holds that office; but the name of his rank and station. When therefore it is said that the "Word was God," the meaning is, that the Word possessed the dignity, character and station of God. As if it were, "The Word was King." And when it is said the "Word was with God," the phrase signifies that, in another point of view, the Word was with one who possessed that dignity, character and station. The passages of Scripture referred to at the conclusion of the criticism would be pertinent, if we pretended that there was a second God besides the supreme God; or if it could be shown that they are spoken by God the Father with reference to the Son. But perhaps it may be shown in the sequel, that these declarations, namely, that there is no God with God, that there is none besides him, are made respecting the Son, regarded as the manifestation of the invisible Jehovah to his creatures.

I hold therefore that the plain and obvious meaning of the words of this text, namely that the Saviour was from eternity with God, and was God, stands, after the scrutiny of eighteen centuries, and after all that the most ingenious and learned men have been able to invent or discover to the contrary, absolutely untouched.

The next text to which I would call the reader's attention is Rom. ix. 5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.—Amen." Nothing can be more express or distinct than this, "Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever." And here again no Unitarian writer has ventured to assert that these words will not bear the translation here given of them, or even that this is not the most obvious and natural sense of them. The utmost that is attempted is to show that they are capable of another translation; although what that other translation is, or ought to be, they are by no means agreed. This passage has been a most perplexing one to Unitarian writers. No less than five different meanings have been successively proposed and abandoned by them. Some would read, "Of whom by natural descent the Christ came. God who is over all be blessed for ever." Others would say, "Whose are the fathers, and of whom the Christ came, who is above them all. God be blessed for ever."—Others would say, "Of whom the Christ came, who is over all things. God be blessed for ever." But these translations which would make the latter clause an insulated ascription of blessedness to God, have been found to be untenable; because there is no instance in the New Testament, or in the Greek translation of the Old Tes-

tament of an ascription of blessedness to God in the form observed in the words of this text,—that in such a sense it would not be grammatical.* Others would therefore read, "Of whom the Christ came, who is *as* God over all blessed for ever;"—thus introducing the word *as* into the text, without a shadow of authority. The change of the words, "as concerning the flesh," into "by natural descent," is an unwarrantable liberty, and divests the latter part of the sentence of its obvious antithetic form. The apostle, in stating it to be one of the privileges of the Jews, that of them was the Messiah, guards his expression by intimating that he was of them only in an inferior sense, as concerning the flesh: for that he was, in his original nature, God over all blessed for ever.

With none of these interpretations is our author satisfied, as appears by the following critique.

"One text, Rom. ix. 5. Of whom as concerning the flesh, &c. is supposed to afford ample proof, that one, at least, of the foregoing titles, is applied to Christ. But this is a text which, in the opinion of

* Our author I observe in a note appended to his second Edition, asserts that this criticism is shown, to be not worth the paper on which it is written by a single text from the Septuagint—Ps. lxviii. 19. "Grabii Septu. ψαλ. ξζ 20." What! a criticism, which ascertains the import of a Greek form of phraseology of very frequent occurrence, with a single exception, not worth the paper on which it is written! This is a strange judgment from a Scripture critic. On examination however it will be found that the alleged exception is no exception whatever. It is not the expression of a desire that God may be blessed; but a declaration that God is blessed; or rather a title given to God,—the Lord, the blessed God. Besides in the passage in Rom. ix. the word *theos* has not the article, whereas in Ps. lxviii. the article is prefixed. And the want of the article, as has been proved by Middleton and others, determines the last clause of the verse, "who is over all, God blessed for ever," to be predicated of Christ, who had been mentioned just before. The passage however in the lxx. does not correspond with the Hebrew, and is manifestly corrupt.

the most learned critics, admits of a very different interpretation. The ascription, in this solitary instance, of a title to Christ, which is given to him no where else, and which belongs peculiarly to the Father, naturally leads us to suspect an erroneous reading. Grotius informs us (ex Syro) that ancient copies had not the word God—but ran thus ὁ ων επι παντων ἐυλογητος, which reading, he observes, is more consistent with Paul's style, for when he speaks of Father and Son together, he terms the former God and the latter Lord. He farther remarks that according to Erasmus, this was the reading of the old copies of Cyprian, and that it was followed both by Hilary and Chrysostome. Hence there is sufficient reason to conclude that there has been some corruption or dislocation of the words in the text; and we are led still more strongly to this conclusion by the subject itself. It seems strange that the apostle, in enumerating to the Jews their peculiar privileges, should omit the greatest of all, that of having God himself, in a special manner for their king, and supreme legislator. It has accordingly been suggested that the transposition of two little words* ὁ ὠν to ὠν ὁ, the participle now becoming the genitive plural of a pronoun, the same as that which precedes it, will probably restore the original reading; supply the omission which has been remarked; complete a noble climax agreeable to the apostle's style of composition, and certainly add great force and beauty to the passage. It will then read in connexion with the preceding verse, thus: —The Israelites *whose* is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, *whose* are the Fathers, and of *whom* as concerning the flesh Christ came, *whose* is the God over all blessed for ever."†

* This is not a fair statement of the alteration proposed, because the aspirates, marked by small commas, are in ancient manuscripts expressed by letters. The author imagines that, in every manuscript extant, the letters ΗΩΝΗΟ have been converted into ΗΟΩΝ which is incredible, especially as the sense is totally altered by the change.

† Page 24.

In a note our author informs us that Whitby and Taylor of Norwich, have each the merit of making the same *ingenious* criticism, nearly at the same time. They it seems however borrowed it from Crellius or Slichtingius, Socinian writers; and our author here, again presents himself as the disciple of these most *learned* critics; by consenting, on their suggestion, to alter the words of the sacred record, and to ascribe a meaning to this passage of Scripture which never seems to have entered into the mind of any Christian writer for 1600 years.

But let us examine the arguments by which this proposed alteration of the words of Scripture is vindicated. He tells us that Grotius, a Unitarian writer, found some manuscripts of the Syriac translation, (as I understand him,)* in which the word *God*, in this text, is omitted, in all probability by the mistake of one copyist, and by the others following him; and that the same Grotius further says that Erasmus, says, that Cyprian and Hilary and Chrysostome read this text without the word *God*. Well, let it be supposed that we receive this hearsay evidence, at second or third hand, and believe that the word *God* was omitted in some ancient copies; although it now appears in every manuscript extant, and in every translation, not excepting the Syriac. Does he then propose that we should omit the word *God*. Not at all, that would ruin his criticism. He only pleads that such variations show that there has been some dislocation

* Our author has certainly fallen into some inadvertency in his note appended to his second Edition. He says "Grotius did not confine his observation to one *version*, for he says *veteres codices*." But *codex* does not signify *version*, but copy or manuscript; and our author must have meant one manuscript, and not one version.

in the words of the text. And this inference he strengthens by noticing some trifling variations in the previous part of the verse, such as may be found in manuscripts, or fathers, or versions, or single copies of versions, in almost every verse of the New Testament. Having thus reduced the text to chaos—resolved it into its elements, he proceeds to make it up again according to his own taste: and the only variation in the words, affecting the sense, which the author brings forward, he himself will not adopt.

But his interpretation is abandoned as untenable by Belsham, a Unitarian writer, not at all scrupulous about the liberties which he takes with the sacred text. He says of it, "This conjecture, ingenious and even probable as it is, not being supported by a single manuscript, version or authority, cannot be admitted into the text."* Yet he is extremely unwilling to part with it, for he adds—"But one may almost believe that the present reading might be owing to an inadvertency in one of the earliest transcribers, if not the apostle's own amanuensis." The translators of the Unitarian version of the New Testament mention this alteration of the text, in a note, with much approbation; but have not dared to insert it in the text. Whether Belsham's conscience became afterwards more seared, as our author seems to intimate in his second edition, so that he became capable of adopting an alteration in the words of Scripture, which he had formerly felt himself compelled to abandon, I know not; but it is manifest that his first judgment, however reluctantly pronounced, was the judgment of truth and soberness,—that

* Belsham's free Enquiry, page 224, as quoted by Dr. Wardlaw.

the alteration "cannot be admitted, not being supported by a single manuscript, version or authority."

It is besides necessary to remark, that, to establish this alteration in the words of the text, another transposition must take place besides that of the 'two little words'—("Is it not a little one?") It is admitted that the apostle is summing up the privileges of the Jews, and accordingly introduces the last particular by the conjunction *and*. "Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, &c. whose are the fathers, *and* of whom Christ came." But if the next clause is to be added to the particulars of the Jewish privileges, the word *and* must be transposed from where it stands to the beginning of the following clause thus, "Whose are the fathers, of whom Christ came, *and* whose is over all God blessed for ever." It may be added that in a prose sentence, the latter clause is forced and unnatural. Had this been the meaning of it, the word *God*, would have been placed before the words, *over all*. "Whose is *God* over all," not, Whose is over all God.

With regard to our author's plea of a noble climax, a rotundity of conclusion, and so forth, it is rendered, to use one of his own expressions, not worth the paper it is written upon by a single text. "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes of the Gentiles also."* To which may be added another—"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; *chiefly*, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."† How did not the apostle mention here that which our Unitarian

* Rom. iii. 29. † Rom. iii. 1, 2.

friends would persuade us was the *chief* privilege of the Jews, that to them belonged God over all? With regard to any peculiar sense in which he was the God of the Jews, it is included in the particulars mentioned by the apostle, "To them pertained the adoption, and the glory and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; that to them belonged the fathers, and of them as concerning the flesh Christ came." After this enumeration of particulars, the addition that God belonged to them, would either have been a statement of error, a contradiction of what the apostle had previously asserted in this very epistle,—that God was the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews; or it would have been an unmeaning tautology: and nothing can be more alien from "the apostle's style of composition," than, for the sake of a noble climax, and a rotundity of conclusion, to promulgate error, or to write nonsense. Besides, the sentence has a much nobler climax and rotundity as it stands. It states as the last and highest privilege of the Jews, that among them should arise that glorious personage, who should be the manifestation of the blessed God to guilty ruined men for their salvation. According to the critical taste of our author and Mr. Wakefield, the apostle is made to notice in regular succession the Jewish privileges, except that he places last, that which naturally would have been mentioned first; namely that God was their God, and that to them consequently belonged the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law.—But the apostle commencing with their original privilege—their adoption as the children of God, enumerates those privileges that followed,—the glory of God made manifest among them, the

covenants established with them, the law given, the service of God appointed, the promises addressed to them, the fathers—the prophets arising among them, till he comes to the last and greatest of all—the manifestation of the great God among them, in human nature—a more glorious manifestation than that which was made to their fathers in the brightest periods of their history. After Christ came, God was no longer, in any sense, peculiarly their God; and the mention of their ancient privilege after the coming of Christ, when it had ceased to exist, would be most unnatural. The proper reply however to the proposal to alter the words of the Bible is still as before, "it cannot be admitted, because it rests on no authority."

I observe that, in his second edition, our author has provided a reserve in the event of his readers revolting from his proposed unauthorised, and unhallowed mutilation of the words of inspiration. "Supposing the original text not to be corrupted," says he, "the passage may be rendered thus: "God who is over all be blessed for ever."* "Supposing!" On what a slender thread the faith of a Unitarian hangs? In regard to this passage of Scripture it is suspended by two suppositions—one, that the text is corrupted, which has no evidence to sustain it, that would support the weight of a straw; the other, that the text is not corrupted, which, in the author's opinion, has a still feebler support. For although he brings forward this translation, it is manifest that he prefers to it his proposed mutilation of the text. He cannot therefore have much confidence in it; and we have already seen that it is utterly unworthy of confidence,

* Page 28, Ed. 2d.

being a violation of the uniform practice of the Greek language.

Here then we have, I conceive, found another instance of the ascription of the title God, nay, and "God over all blessed for ever" to the Lord Jesus Christ, on which the Unitarian crucible has made no impression whatever.

Another passage commented on by our author is Heb. i. 8, 9.—"But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." This passage needs no comment:—it is as clear and express as language can be. To the Son he (God) saith, thy throne O God is for ever and ever, &c.

The author's comment is as follows.

"Even the address of the Father to the Son in the 8th and 9th verses, demonstrates the superiority of the former. This address is borrowed from the xlv. Psalm, and was originally a part of Solomon's Epithalamium, on his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter; and a small portion of this "Song of loves," as it is entitled in the original, is, in this chapter of the Hebrews, very properly *accommodated* to Christ, who, as well as Solomon, was a Son or descendant of David. If the words were applicable to Solomon, much more were they applicable to Christ, for "behold a greater than Solomon is here." They are thus rendered by Doctor Young, a scholar and divine, not less distinguished by profound erudition than by elegance of taste. 'Thy throne, O PRINCE, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom,' &c.

"However just and appropriate the application

of these verses to Christ, they can have none to the Eternal and Almighty ONE. He cannot be appointed to any office;—appointment implies a greater and a less; he cannot be made the agent of any other---he cannot be anointed---and he can have no fellows."*

The whole of this critique is marked by a temerity that is absolutely appalling. In the first place, there is not a shadow of evidence that the Psalm was ever addressed to Solomon. The name of Solomon is not once mentioned in it. Even if it were called "a Song of loves," in the original of the Psalm, that would not prove that it had any connexion with Solomon. But it is called so only in the title, and these titles are held in so little esteem as to be omitted in some editions of the Bible. In the second place, the inspired apostle expressly declares that it is an address of God to the Son of God; and the author himself admits that it is an address of the Father to the Son. "Even the address," says he, "of the Father to the Son." How he can reconcile this admission with its being an address to Solomon, *accommodated* to Christ by the apostle, is to me utterly incomprehensible.—Whose address to Solomon? Is it the address of Almighty God to him? Or is the author of the Psalm to be compared to God the Father, as Solomon is to Christ? In the third place, to suppose these words addressed to Solomon, is to charge the Old Testament Scriptures with an act of as gross idolatry as can be conceived.—Who would for a moment hesitate to address these words to the supreme God? And shall it be asserted, in the teeth of an inspired apostle's explanation of them, that they were addressed to Solomon? Surely if such words as these might

* Page 26, and Ed. 2d, page 31.

be addressed to Solomon without idolatry, any language of adoration might be addressed to Jesus, "for a greater than Solomon is here."—How with such a Scriptural example before him, could the author represent any man who worships Jesus as guilty of idolatry? With regard to the translation given by Dr. Young, whom the author, of course, eulogizes as a man of taste and learning, it is most audacious. It is ascribing to a word, which occurs more than two thousand times in the Old Testament, a sense which it does not bear in one single instance; and applying it in a manner of which there is not a single example. It is a translation too, directly opposed to that of the apostle, who renders the word which Dr. Young renders *prince* by the Greek word, *Theos* (*God*); a word which occurs above 1500 times, in the New Testament, but not once in the sense of *prince*, nor is it once given as a title to any individual creature.

We have thus three indisputable instances, (for although they are all disputed, yet on grounds so pitiably frivolous, that I cannot regard them as even disputable,) of the title *God* given to the Saviour in the New Testament.

And here I would observe that these passages ought to be regarded as determining the sense of many other passages, in which the same title is given to the Redeemer, if they be interpretated according to the plain obvious meaning of the words; although the ingenuity of criticism may discover another sense, which, with some constraint, they may be made to bear. A doctrine may be very distinctly declared, although not in words of that sort of legal accuracy, which absolutely precludes the possibility of another interpretation. All such passages Unitarian

writers have been in the custom of claiming as an easy conquest, simply on the ground that the common interpretation of them favoured doctrines, which they pronounce to be inconsistent with common sense and reason. I must take the liberty however of appealing from their common sense, to that of the sacred penmen, and to the plain obvious meaning of the words employed by them; and especially I must maintain, that the meaning of such passages is to be determined by those passages in which all the learning and ingenuity of criticism has discovered no ambiguity.

As I conceive this observation to be important to the interests of Biblical criticism, I shall illustrate it by a parallel example. Unitarians very generally, like the ancient Sadducees, deny the existence of such a being as Satan, and of evil spirits; and the instances of demoniac possession so frequently mentioned in the New Testament, they explain as figurative language, (that universal solvent of all difficulties,) and conceive that they were nothing more than natural diseases; that the Jews imagined that they were possessed of evil spirits, and that Jesus did not choose to undeceive them, but left them under the bondage of this terrific imagination; nay even countenanced it, by pretending to hold conversation with the evil spirits, and to cast them out, when in fact he was only healing the diseases under which the afflicted persons laboured. I might leave this interpretation to that indignation which must be excited in the bosom of every honest man, who feels even a common respect for the character of the blessed Jesus, when he hears such an imputation cast upon him, as that he could avail himself of a most pernicious and distressing popular superstition,

to exalt his own reputation. But, independently of this consideration, if a single passage can be produced, which positively and absolutely determines that there was a real demoniac possession, that single passage ought manifestly to be held as determining the sense of all the other statements of demoniac possession. For instance, the narrative of the demons that besought and obtained liberty from Jesus to enter into the herd of swine* is precisely such a passage. No rational account has ever been given of the natural disease with which 2000 swine were so suddenly seized, which could have impelled them to run headlong down the steep into the lake where they perished. Nor has any account been given of the conversation which our Lord carried on with the unclean spirits. In other cases it would be said, that he conversed with the man who imagined himself possessed of devils; but in this case it would be difficult to show how the man entered into the swine. Accordingly the Unitarian translators of the New Testament, although they attempt explanations of other cases of demoniac possession, are altogether silent on this—a sufficient proof, that, up till the commencement of the nineteenth century, no explanation of this narrative consistently with the principle that demoniac possessions were only natural diseases had been thought of; or at least none that could, with any prospect of success, be laid before the British public. Now this passage ought obviously to be regarded as determining the meaning of all other passages in which demoniac possession is mentioned, to imply a real possession of evil spirits; and it would be an abuse of criticism to assert that this is the

* Mark v. 11.

only passage in which demoniac possession is mentioned, merely on the ground that other passages which seemed to assert the same fact might possibly be otherwise explained.

Now, (to apply this principle to our proper subject,) we find a multitude of passages in the New Testament, in which the title God seems at least to be given to the Saviour. It is pleaded however that these passages may be understood in some other sense. But if we find even one passage, much more if we find three, from which all the ingenuity of man, exercised for perhaps fifteen or sixteen centuries, has not been able to extract any other sense, then surely, these ought to be regarded as determining the sense of all the others: and it would be a most gross abuse of criticism to assert, that these are the only passages in which that title is given to the Redeemer, merely because it is conceived that the others may be disputed.

I should not have considered it necessary to press this topic so urgently, were it not that Unitarian writers are in the constant practice of objecting to the doctrine of the Divine nature of the Redeemer, the small number of passages in which it is taught. The number of passages, if they be understood in their most obvious sense, that sense in which persons uninterested in the controversy would certainly understand them, is very great; but it is not to be expected, that, in every passage in which a doctrine is stated, the language should be of that precise, guarded, as it were, legal description, which is framed for the purpose of precluding dispute. If one or two passages be thus precise and determinate, the rest should be interpreted by them. Not that we wish any passage to be wrested from its obvious meaning, upon any such considera-

tions; but merely that its obvious meaning should be preferred to any other, even although it should state a doctrine that appears to be mysterious.—The doctrine being explicitly taught elsewhere, these ought to be regarded as so many confirmations of it.

I now therefore proceed to bring forward some of those passages which I have had in view in these observations.

The first which I shall notice furnishes a very happy exemplification of the principle which I have been endeavouring to establish. 1 John v. 20.—"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ; this is the true God, and eternal life." Here, according to the obvious interpretation of the words, Jesus is called, "the true God and eternal life." But it is urged by Unitarian critics, that the word, '*this*'—'this is the true God,' may refer, not to Jesus Christ, who is the immediate antecedent, but to the words, '*him that is true*,' which occur before the name 'Jesus Christ.' And it is not denied that instances may be found of a relative pronoun referring, not to the immediate, but to a prior antecedent. It will however be admitted that this is a loose and unusual mode of writing. Very few instances of it have been produced from the New Testament. In the common and ordinary acceptation of the words, Jesus Christ is here called the true God. And that this is the just interpretation is confirmed by the consideration, that the title God is unequivocally given to our blessed Lord in other passages; and also by reasons drawn from this passage itself. The latter

part of this title, "Eternal life," it is admitted, belongs to the Lord Jesus, and is given to him at the commencement of this epistle, chap. i. 2. "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us." What then could be more unnatural than that, in the clause, "This is the true God, and eternal life," the words 'eternal life' should be explained as referring to Christ, who had just been mentioned, and the words, 'the true God,' as referring to 'Him that is true,' who had been previously mentioned.—And this interpretation is rendered still more out of place by the words which follow, which are an exhortation to shun idolatry. Is it to be imagined, that, with this subject in his eye, the apostle should express himself so unguardedly, that his words, taken in their most obvious meaning, would be a sanction of idolatry,—which they certainly would be, if Jesus were not God?

Another passage is commented upon by our author, which may be noticed under this head, namely, Is. ix. 6.—"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Our author's critique on this passage is as follows.

"Trinitarians rest great weight on another passage of Isaiah ix. 6, applied by that prophet to HEZEKIAH, 'Unto us a child is born,' &c. 'The words everlasting Father,' says Dr. Clarke, (an Arian) 'are very ill rendered; for it is absurd to say of the Son that he is the everlasting Father,

the Father of himself. The phrase ought to be rendered the Father or Lord of the age to come.'— This is well, and it might be added, that no prophet could affirm of the Father, meaning God, that he had ever been a child or was born. But on what authority, save that of orthodox divines, are they applied to Christ at all? They may certainly be used as descriptive of the character of him who was so truly the Prince of Peace---but nothing was farther from the mind of the prophet who wrote them than such a reference. They were applied by him to the son of Ahaz, whom he names Immanuel. Such lofty hyperbolical epithets are perfectly in accordance with the style of Oriental description;— particularly prophetic and poetical description.— Moreover it was customary with the Jews to give names to individuals expressive of some event or circumstance of their lives; and such names were frequently associated with that of God, in a manner which may excite the surprise of those who have thought the title of Immanuel, when applied to Christ, demonstrative of his Deity. Thus Hezekiah signifies "God my strength."---Israel, "Prince of God."--- Elijah, "God the Lord; or the strong Lord."--- Elisha, "Salvation of God; or God that saves."--- Jotham, "Perfection of the Lord."---Ishmael, "God who hears."---Lemuel, "God with them." The word Immanuel, therefore, though it belonged, exclusively to Christ, which it did not, yields no support to the cause for which it is adduced as an auxiliary. Even the term Jehovah, the peculiar name of God, is applied as an appellation to others, without establishing any argument for asserting the Deity of those to whom such names are given. "In those days, shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer. xxxiii. 16. In the English version, the word Jehovah is rendered Lord in this and other passages. "And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah Nissi; or JEHOVAH MY BANNER."—Exod. xvii. 15. It is fortunate that some

sect has not hitherto arisen, maintaining the Deity of Jerusalem, or of the altar of Moses, from the authority of the passages just mentioned."*

Here our author, with his usual confidence, asserts that this text was applied by the prophet to Hezekiah; and asks on what authority, save that of orthodox divines, is it applied to Christ at all. I might ask in return on what authority, save his own and that of Rammohun Roy, it is applied to Hezekiah, who is not once mentioned in the whole of that prophecy. But I shall rather give the authority on which we apply it to Christ. Our first authority is that of the Evangelist Matthew, who applies the words of a preceding verse of the same prophecy to the Messiah. "The land of Zebulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."† Another authority we have in Paul, who applies a verse of a following chapter, which is manifestly part of the same prophecy, to the Redeemer.—"And again Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust."‡ The whole description of peace and security given in that eleventh chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah is applicable only to the Redeemer's reign. Now if two passages in the same prophetical poem, one of them in immediate connexion with the passage in question, be applied, on the authority of the same Spirit who dictated them, to Jesus, surely it follows, that the passage itself is to be applied

* Page 23. † Matth. iv. 15, 16, compared with Is. ix. 1, 2.
‡ Rom. xv. 12, compared with Is. xl. 1, 10.

to the Redeemer also. We cannot put the authority of our author and Rammohun Roy in competition with this.

We have another reason for applying these words of Isaiah to the Redeemer, namely, that, without idolatry, they could not be applied to any one else. To be the mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of Peace, to have his praises celebrated in a prophetic song, and at the same time, to be born, and to be given as a Son, are characteristics which belong exclusively and peculiarly to the Lord Jesus.

Our author replies to this by a catalogue of names given to persons and to inanimate objects, in which the name of God is introduced; and by a peculiar, and as I conceive, a false translation of these names. Those who know any thing of the Hebrew language are well aware that the omission of the substantive verb *is*, in its different persons and numbers, especially where brevity is studied as in names, is an idiom that occurs in almost every page of the Hebrew Bible. Yet our author, regardless of this idiom, translates the names as if the titles of God, nay and the incommunicable name Jehovah, had been given to a creature; which he must be aware was as foreign as possible from the intention of those who gave the names.—Thus he translates the name Hezekiah, 'God my strength,' as if Hezekiah had been addressed as God—the strength of him who so named him: instead of "God *is* my strength," a name expressive of trust in God. Elijah, he renders "God the Lord," as if a mortal had been addressed by these names, instead of "Jehovah is God," or "Strong *is* Jehovah." Jotham, he renders "Perfection of the Lord," instead of Jehovah *is* perfection. Ishmael, he renders,

"God who hears," an absolutely false translation, as there is nothing in the name corresponding to the relative *who*, being simply, "God will hear." Jehovah nissi, he renders JEHOVAH MY BANNER, instead of "Jehovah *is* my banner;" and Jehovah Tsidkenu, "Jehovah our righteousness," instead of Jehovah *is* our righteousness," a name peculiarly appropriate to Jerusalem in her restored and regenerated state, as descriptive of the sentiments of her inhabitants, that then the mercy of Jehovah would be acknowledged as supplying the place of their righteousness, in their pardon and acceptance with God.

These names were manifestly given as expressions of piety towards God. The honour was intended, not for the person to whom the name was given, but for God, after whom the person or thing was named. But what analogy is there between names given in such a spirit, and for such a purpose, and a number of epithets, heaped upon an individual in a prophetic poem, as descriptive of his personal power and majesty. The former names were literally given to the persons or things distinguished by them; Hezekiah, 'God is my strength,' was the name by which that king was designated; but the epithets used in this text were never given to him as names—he is never in the whole Bible called, the Wonderful, or the Counsellor, or the Mighty God, or the Everlasting Father, or the Prince of Peace. If these titles be given to him, they are given as descriptive of his own glory and majesty, and the prophetic poem must be regarded as a hymn of praise addressed to Hezekiah, than which nothing can be more abhorrent to the spirit, precepts, and practice of the sacred writers.

The author tells us that such lofty hyperbolical epithets are perfectly in accordance with the

style of Oriental description, particularly prophetic and poetical description. I am fully aware that heathen poets, in their profane and idolatrous adulation of the great, have made very free use of such epithets; it was also very natural for Rammohun Roy, a partially enlightened heathen, with very inadequate views of the sacredness and authority of our Scriptures, and with many of his Hindoo predilections in full force, to draw a parallel between the word of God, and the blasphemous poetry to which he has been accustomed.* But what are we to think of the recognized Pastor of a professingly Christian congregation, giving his sanction to such a parallel, and admitting that an inspired prophet might describe the yet unknown son of a most wicked king, as the Mighty God, the Father of eternity to come, the Prince of Peace? Surely if Solomon might, consistently with the principles of Scripture, be addressed in such language as this, "Thy throne O God is for ever and ever," and if Hezekiah might be foretold as "the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," who was about to arise, there is no guard whatever in the Bible against the most flagrant idolatry, being paid to persons in authority. Either the divine honours that were paid to the

* Rammohun Roy's Christianity has not, I understand, induced him to relinquish his distinction of Caste, or to associate with Christians, otherwise than as lying under the pollution in which Hindooism plunges the whole race, with the exception of its own votaries. So long however as a man adheres practically to this presumptuous dogma of any modification of heathenism, he is no Christian. He is cleaving to an imaginary purity which Christianity repudiates as vile and delusive, and he is branding those with impurity whom Christianity declares to be holy. He must take his side more decisively before he can be recognized as a Christian commentator. At present he is only attempting to reconcile the new light which he has imbibed from the Scriptures, to the pride of his heathen assumptions.

Roman emperors, in the most detestable periods of their history, were justified and sanctioned by these examples, or the inspired penmen are found guilty by our author of the most palpable and wicked idolatry.

Similar observations are made on another passage, Is. vii. 14.—"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The author's comment on this passage stands thus,

"The passage in Matth. i. 23. is this—"Behold a virgin," &c. Louth says that these words did not primarily apply to Christ, and Rammohun Roy has most clearly shown that they were applied by Isaiah vii. 14. "to Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, figuratively designated as the son of the virgin, the daughter of Zion, to wit, Jerusalem foretold by the prophet, as the deliverer of the city from the hands of its enemies, though its utter destruction was then threatened by the kings of Syria and Israel." Orthodox writers, in the interpretation of the text, observes the same learned author, have "entirely disregarded the original Scripture, the context, and the historical facts. It should be rendered not *a virgin*, but THE virgin, viz. The virgin daughter of Zion, the city of Jerusalem. Thus Isaiah xxiii. 12:---"Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed *virgin*, daughter of Zion." xxxvii. 22.---"The virgin, the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee."---Jer. xiv. 17. "Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease; for the *virgin* daughter of my people is broken with a great breach." The Evangelist Matthew applies Is. vii. 14. by way of accommodation to Christ---"The son of Ahaz, and the Saviour resembling each other, in each being the means, at

different periods, though in different senses, of establishing the throne of the house of David."*

Certainly of all writers that I have ever met with, our author has least reason to complain of any person bending to human authority. His dexterity in discovering human authorities to which he may yield himself with the most profound submission, is quite extraordinary. It would seem as if he durst not move a step, without the sanction of some most learned and able and candid expositor to lean upon, or at least the admission of some 'learned Trinitarian' to certify to him that he is right. Here we have the authorities of Louth and Rammohun Roy for an interpretation of Scripture, to whom are added in his second edition, Dr. Campbell of Aberdeen. Upon the authority of all these learned men he asserts, that the virgin spoken of by the prophet Isaiah was Jerusalem; who, in a totally different poem, unconnected with the one from which the text is taken, is called a *virgin*. In opposition to this I might quote other prophecies in which Jerusalem is called a *harlot*.

But against all these authorities I place that of the Evangelist Matthew—"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."† It is true, Louth admits that these words might not primarily apply to Christ. In that supposition he may be correct, because I doubt not that many of these prophecies had reference to a fulfilment, primary in point of time, to

* Page 22. † Mat. i. 23.

their great and ultimate fulfilment. Louth does not however deny that their chief and proper fulfilment was in Christ Jesus: on the contrary, his whole comment is founded on this principle. Rammohun Roy, as it appears, asserts that, in applying these words to Christ, we disregard the original Scripture. I ask, is the Gospel of Matthew original Scripture or not? We derive our explanation from him, and it is he, not we, that must be charged with overlooking the original Scripture. But our author asserts, that the words of Isaiah are applied, only by way of accommodation, to our Lord, by the Evangelist Matthew. And Rammohun Roy appeals to Dr. Campbell, who renders the passage, "In all this, what the Lord had spoken by the prophet was verified," and who, in a note, supports this rendering by referring to Mat. ii. 15. a quotation from Hos. xi. 1., where the Evangelist applies a passage to Jesus which the prophet spoke of the Israelites, as being more emphatically applicable to the Saviour. Although Dr. Campbell, being a minister of the Church of Scotland, must no doubt be ranked as a Trinitarian; yet I apprehend that those who know his writings will not be disposed to view his criticism as an admission, but as an attack. His reputation stands high for learning and acuteness; but certainly not for orthodoxy. I conceive that the note in question is calculated, not to instruct, but to mislead his readers. It confounds different forms in which the Old Testament Scripture is quoted in the New Testament. It is possible, although by no means certain, that when it is said simply, "then was fulfilled the saying," &c. a mere application of the language may be meant; but when it is said 'that any thing was done *that it might* be fulfilled,' it always implies that the prophecy was a pre-

diction of the event alluded to. Whitby, a commentator whom no one will accuse of enthusiasm, nor of want of learning, says, respecting the passage Mat. ii. 15.—"These words can import no less than that the calling of Christ out of Egypt was by God intended as a completion of these words; and that till he was called thence, they had not their full and ultimate completion." We cannot consent to abandon the plain obvious meaning of language, on the authority, either of the mistaken or insidious admissions of men professing orthodoxy, or on that of the confident assertions of Unitarians. Let the Rev. author bring forward clear unequivocal examples, from the New Testament, of so singular a departure from the usage of language, and we shall attend to his representations; but we must have firmer ground to tread upon, than the opinions of Le Clerc, or Dr. Campbell, or Rammohun Roy.

But our author argues that even if the name were given to Christ, it would not be an evidence of his Divinity, because the same name is given to others, and may be translated, 'God *is* with us.' I can find no evidence that it is given to any others. I have no doubt whatever that in Is. viii. 8. where the prophet says, respecting the enemies of Israel, "They shall fill the breadth of thy land O Immanuel," he speaks of God whose land peculiarly that was—that land which should be honoured as the place where God should peculiarly manifest himself as *with* his people. The name was never actually given to Hezekiah, and even if it had been given to him, that would not have lowered its import as given to our Lord. It might as well be argued that the name Jesus did not point him out as a Saviour, because that name was borne by many

others. But the Evangelist declares that he was called Jesus, because *he* should save his people from their sins. So he is called Emmanuel, as descriptive of his relation to us, as being "God with us." That the Hebrew words may be rendered, 'God is with us,' is true; and I am glad that the author has recollected this fact, as it will throw light on some of the other names which he has rendered without the verb *is;* but in this case, the name cannot be so translated, because the Evangelist Matthew has translated it otherwise, and informed us on authority, that, in this instance, as applied to Jesus, it signifies not 'God *is* with us,' but 'GOD WITH US.'

Another passage, that falls under consideration at present, is 1 Tim. iii. 16.—"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." There can be no reasonable doubt that this passage refers to the Lord Jesus, nor do I remember having seen this application of it disputed. It contains an epitome of his history, and is applicable to no one else.

There is however an important variation in the reading of this verse in different manuscripts. A large proportion of them, and these of most value, instead of the word *God,* have the word *who,*—"Who was manifest in the flesh;" and one or two of small authority have *which*—"Which (i. e. mystery) was manifest," &c.—Against the last reading there are strong objections; in the first place there is little authority for it; in the next place, it would render the sentence unintelligible, (for what could be made of a mystery being seen of angels and received up

into glory?) : while yet it is a reading that might very readily be introduced by mistake, for the noun immediately preceding being *mystery*, it was very natural for a hasty transcriber, not attending to the general import of the sentence, to make the relative agree with the noun last rehearsed. In the present state of the evidence, therefore, the word *who*, is pointed out as the genuine reading. But to whom does this relative, *who*, refer? The reply is very obvious, to the word *God* in the previous verse. "The church of the living *God*, the pillar and ground of the truth (and without controversy the mystery of godliness is great,) *who* was manifest in the flesh," &c. According to this reading, as well as the common reading, therefore, the Lord Jesus is here again called God. Unitarian writers, after insisting on the reading *who*, insist further on rendering the word *he who*, and produce some instances in which the word *who* is so to be understood. It is admitted that, where there is no antecedent, the Greek relative, as well as our own relative, must be understood in some such sense.

"*Who* makes the Almighty his resort."

That is, *he who*, or *whosoever*, does so. But these instances are as rare in Greek as in English; and to render a relative thus, when an antecedent exists perfectly agreeing with it, is surely doing violence to the language. I hold that this passage also, therefore, understood according to the obvious import of the words, gives the title God to the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a class of passages which, in the original language speak the same sense; although

in our English translation they seem to wear a different aspect. It is a general rule in the Greek language, that when two personal nouns (not proper names, but such as denote character, relation, or dignity) of the same case, are connected with the copulative *kai* (*and*) if the former have the definite article, and the latter have not, they both relate to the same person. Thus, 2 Cor. i. 3.—"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord," &c. here because, in the original Greek, the word Father has not the article, it designates, the same person with the word *God;* and the whole would be better rendered—"Blessed be he who is the God and Father of our Lord," &c. Again, Phil. iv. 20.—"Now unto God and our Father," &c. Here again, the word Father not having in the original the article, the meaning is, "Now unto him who is our God and Father."

Now, according to this constant practice of the language, the following, amongst other passages, should be interpreted. Eph. v. verse 5—"No idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." The word God wants the article, while the word Christ has it; and therefore the sentence should be understood thus—"No idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of him who is the Christ and God." Tit. ii. 13.—"The glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Here the word *Saviour* wants the article, while the word *God* has it; and therefore the passage should be rendered, "The glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ;" and it was so rendered in the older English translations.—There is, besides, another obvious reason for understanding both the words, *God* and *Saviour*, as referring to Jesus Christ, namely, that, if by

God, we are to understand the Father – the King eternal, immortal and *invisible*, it would contain an intimation of the appearing of God the Father, which is no where intimated in Scripture; but which, on the contrary, seems to be inconsistent with some of its declarations. Still again, 2 Pet. i. 1.—"Through the righteousness of God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Here also, for the same reason, namely, that the word Saviour has not the article, while the word God has it, the passage should be rendered, "Through the righteousness of our God and Saviour—Jesus Christ." The same form of expression occurs with the word Lord, in verse 11 of the same chapter, and is thus rendered, "The everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

The last passage of this description which I shall notice is Jude 4, "Denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." According to the above rule the proper rendering is—"Denying our only master, God, and Lord, Jesus Christ." A preponderance of authorities omit the word *God* in this passage, and Griesbach decides against its being retained in the text; but our author insists on its remaining because, if it were rejected, the word δεσποτης (*despotes*) *master* would be given to Christ, which he strongly resists. His critique is an admirable specimen of Unitarian argument.

"Parkhurst, "says he," would willingly apply to Christ τον μονον Δεσποτην, in Jude 4, "denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." He thinks that the want of the article τον (*ton*) before Κυριον (*Kurion*), shows that Jesus Christ is there styled the only Lord; but he is refuted by Grotius and Woltzogenius."

'Parkhurst thinks,' says he, 'when the rule is as well established as any in the Greek language. But he is 'refuted by Grotius and Woltzogenius.' Our author would have written more to the purpose if, instead of the names of these learned and able critics, he had given us their arguments; for he may not find us so much disposed tamely to follow, 'able and learned and candid critics,' as he. But he proceeds—

"Or if, with several MSS. we omit the word Θεον *(God)*, altogether, the application to Christ will be still more evident. No doubt. But since the meaning is perfectly clear, since no good reason can be assigned for any change, since our version of it is, as Whitby affirms" (another great name,) "without any exception," since it is in perfect harmony with the great doctrine of Scripture, that God alone is Deity supreme, and, above all, since it most clearly marks the distinction, which no Christian should ever forget, between the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the Unitarian desires that the text may not be mutilated."*

Our author here, with the utmost gravity, asserts that a preponderance of authorities against a reading is no good reason for rejecting it; and pronounces that Griesbach, whose authority he eagerly catches at when it tends to countenance him, had no good authority for throwing the word into the margin. The explanation of the whole criticism is, that wherever any particular reading tends to support Unitarian doctrine, however slender the authority for it, or even if it be destitute of all authority, it is to be adopted. With such a principle of criticism, it is extraordinary that our author does not

* Page 29, Ed. 2d

find some stronger defence of his opinions; for to him who determines, not that his opinions shall bend to evidence, but that all evidence shall bend to his opinions, nothing should be difficult.

In regard to this text, as the authorities do not greatly preponderate, he may take his choice. Either Christ is here called *God*, or a title which the author claims as exclusively belonging to God, is most decisively given to Christ.

In all of these instances, according to the ordinary rules of Greek syntax, our Blessed Lord is designated by the title *God:* and that too, without any reference to the inferior sense in which the Hebrew word rendered God bears in some few instances. And several *indisputable* instances of this title given to him having been produced, there can be no reason why these passages should be drawn aside from their direct and natural meaning.

CHAP. VI.

THE NAME JEHOVAH GIVEN TO JESUS CHRIST.

HAVING proved that the appellation *God* is given to the Redeemer in its highest sense, I proceed now to prove that the name JEHOVAH is given to him. The difference between the force of the words *God* and *Jehovah* is, that *God* is an appellative, expressing the divine nature, character, and, if I may so speak, station of the Deity; whereas *Jehovah* is the proper name which God has adopted, for the purpose of distinguishing himself from the false gods of the heathen. The word *God* may be compared to the word *king*—a title descriptive of the rank, power, office, &c. of the person who bears it; the word *Jehovah* may be compared to the proper name of any individual king, as George the Fourth. The title *God* is therefore given to designate false gods, always however with sufficient intimation that they are false; but the name Jehovah is never given to any but the one living and true God. Accordingly this name is claimed by God as his own peculiar name. Thus Exod. iv. 5.—"That they may believe that JEHOVAH, God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee." Again, chap. vi. 2, 3, "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am

JEHOVAH: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." Again, Ps. lxxxiii. 18— "That men may know that thou, whose name *alone* is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth."

Now if we find this proper name given, again and again, to the Blessed Jesus in addition to the title God, is it possible to conceive of a more determinate intimation that Jesus is indeed the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and who appeared to Moses? Suppose that an individual should appear in any provincial town in the empire, about whose person there were some mystery or uncertainty, and that it were asserted of him that he was THE KING; there would be very little doubt of the meaning of the person who made such an assertion. Still however, as the word *king* is only an appellative, some shadow of doubt might rest upon his meaning. But if he should add, George the Fourth, it is impossible to conceive how he could express himself with more unequivocal precision. Now we have found that the Lord Jesus Christ is most distinctly declared in the Scripture to be God. This seems a very decisive answer to the question, Who is he? But if we shall find that the proper name Jehovah is also given to him; it is difficult to imagine a more definite answer.

Before adducing passages in which the name Jehovah is given to the Lord Jesus, it is necessary to observe that the Hebrew name Jehovah no where occurs in the New Testament. When passages from the Old Testament, in which it stands, are translated into Greek in the New Testament, it is always rendered by the Greek word κυριος *(kurios) Lord.* But this word *ku-*

rios, like the English word *lord*, has various significations. Sometimes it signifies little more than *sir* or *master*, sometimes *proprietor*, and sometimes it is a title of rank. Used in a religious sense, it is a title frequently given to God. It is admitted on all hands that it is given in a religious sense, and with the same exclusive aspect, to Jesus Christ, as it is given to God.—He, as well as God, is in a multitude of instances called, THE LORD. This itself is a very extraordinary fact; and unless he be God, is an ambiguity, that, to use our author's illustration, would much more urgently require the interposition of the infallible church, than any ambiguity of language occasioned by the two natures of the Redeemer. Let any English reader consider what the import would be of his calling any man, THE LORD, with reference to the salvation of his soul, and his religious duties; and he will be able to judge of the import of such an appellation given to the Lord Jesus: for there is no greater ambiguity attached to the use of the word in Greek, than there is in English.

But as there is the same ambiguity in the use of the word Lord in Greek as in English, I shall rest nothing upon that title being addressed to Jesus, especially when it was bestowed on him in his presence, as an expression of respect. I shall admit that, in such cases, it might signify no more than *sir* or *master*. But there are passages in the Old Testament containing the name Jehovah, which are quoted in the New, and expressly applied to our Lord; and in these cases, even if there were no others, the name JEHOVAH is given to Jesus.

One such passage is commented upon by our author, with which we shall commence. It is a quotation from Ps. cii. in Heb. i. 10—12.—

"Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." Here, it is manifest, that the Greek word *kurios* (lord) corresponds to the Hebrew word Jehovah; for the person addressed in the Psalm is throughout designated by this name. It is no less manifest, that these words are asserted by the apostle to be addressed to the Son of God. They form part of that address to the Son which commences at the 8th verse. Our author, however, thus comments upon this text.

"'These words, he' (Mr. Pope,) 'says are applied to Christ.' How they are applied he does not inform us, and therefore we are left to guess. If they are to be considered as a continuation of the address of the Father to the Son, then does one eternal being tell another eternal being, the palpable truism, that his years shall not fail. Reason and common sense cannot discover any meaning or object in this. If the passage be supposed an address to Christ, by the author of the epistle, what is the proof that it is to him, and not to the Father himself, to whom it was originally addressed? The connexion of the passage with the preceding verses is not clear. The author's style is very elliptical, often abstruse; and it is by no means easy to trace in it an uninterrupted current of thought. Notwithstanding, some circumstances lead us to conclude decidedly, that the verses are addressed by the author to Jehovah, as they were originally addressed in the Psalm from which they are borrowed. Their object in the Psalm was to confirm the truth, "*that the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.*" With a similar view are they cited here, to prove from the per-

manence and immutability of the eternal ONE, the durable nature of the spiritual kingdom which he established by the agency of the Son. What Hebrew, and the Epistle is to Hebrews, could possibly suppose them applicable to any one but his own Jehovah, the Father everlasting, who, in the beginning created the heavens and the earth—who stretcheth forth the heavens *alone*, that spreadeth abroad the earth by *himself*—Is. xliv. 24. 'Emlyn,' (more candid critics) 'observes that this, though a new citation, is not prefaced with, *and to the Son he saith*, as v. 8., or with an *again*, as v. 5, 6, and ii. 13., but barely, *and thou* Lord. Now the God last mentioned was Christ's God who had anointed him; and the *author* thereupon, addressing himself to this God, breaks out into the celebration of his *power*, and especially of his *unchangeable duration*.—The same learned divine!! proceeds to show that no one ancient writer ever applied the words to Christ, during the first three centuries; and that Dr. Waterland does not pretend that they were ever so applied till the fourth or fifth. The verses which precede the passage in question, show as clearly as language can well express, the inferiority and subordination of Christ. They tell us that God hath spoken by him, and of course he is God's agent or minister, whom he hath *appointed* heir of all things—by whom he hath made the æons, or ages, not the worlds, composing the material system, as some erroneously imagine, but the dispensations of his word; a truth of some importance for us to understand."*

Our author's first object, the reader will observe, is to throw darkness and uncertainty upon a passage which is as clear as sun shine. "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne O God is for ever and ever, and Thou Lord in the beginning," &c. First, he does not know to whom the words are

* Page 30, Ed. 2d.

addressed, or by whom they are addressed; although the apostle expressly says that 'God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners spake to the prophets,' spoke these words to the Son. Then 'the connexion of the passage is not clear,' &c. It must be darkness itself to one who is predetermined not to see that the Son of God is addressed in it. Nay, but more, "Reason and common sense can discover no meaning or object in them, viewed as an address from the Father to the Son." That is, the author, who is predetermined to see no meaning or object in them under that view, can discover none. In that case, says he, "One eternal being would be telling another eternal being, the palpable truism, that his years shall not fail." It is distressing to transcribe such language. No! the eternal God tells *us*, in the form of an address to his Son, dictated to one of his servants, for our perusal, that the Son is eternal, and that his years shall not fail. But further, we are told that Emlyn, a learned divine, observes that the second passage is not introduced by the same words, *unto the Son he saith*, (although nothing would have been more unnatural); nor even by the word *again*, as in some other passages. The reader will discover the futility of this observation, by turning to the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where he will find quotations from seven different portions of the Old Testament, following one another, without any such separate introductions, *it is written*, or *again*, or even the word *and*. But the same 'learned divine' proceeds to show that no ancient writer ever applied the words to Christ during the first three centuries. And what if no uninspired writer ever mentioned them; would their silence overturn the apostle's assertion that they are addressed to

Christ? Our author has no objection to tradition when he thinks he can derive any countenance from it.

Our author further observes, that the object of the words in the Psalm is to confirm this declaration, "The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee." It is asserted in the Psalm that so it shall be; but not as a logical deduction from the words of the text; from which indeed that promise could never be inferred, or even derive confirmation. "With a similar view," says he, "are they cited here to prove from the permanence and immutability of the eternal ONE, the durable nature of the spiritual kingdom." Not a syllable is said of the kingdom of the Redeemer in the whole passage. The subject before the mind of the apostle was the glory of his nature and person; not the glory of his kingdom, or the security of his subjects. He is comparing him with the angels, to show how much more glorious he is than they. He makes the comparison before he introduces these quotations, and he recurs to it immediately afterwards.

In one point I most cordially concur with the author, that no Hebrew could possibly have supposed these words applicable to any one but his own Jehovah, the Father everlasting; from which I infer, that the apostle Paul most explicitly taught the Hebrews, that the Son of God, the Lord Jesus, was that Jehovah, that Father everlasting, manifesting himself to the world in human nature.

The latter part of the critique, which is a mere *petitio principii*—a taking for granted the point at issue, (the author's system employed, as if it had been previously proved, to set aside the very facts on which any Scriptural system must

be founded) will be considered in a subsequent chapter.

Having thus produced one clear, unequivocal instance, in which the proper name JEHOVAH is given to the Redeemer, I shall do little more than cite a few more instances of the same description.

In Isaiah vi. 1—5. we thus read—"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD (Jehovah) of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD (Jehovah) of hosts." Now when we compare this assertion of Isaiah, that his eyes had seen the King, Jehovah of hosts, with the assertion of the evangelist John, that "*No man* hath seen God *at any time*," but that, "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him;"* it seems difficult to reconcile the two passages without believing, that the person whom Isaiah saw was the Lord Jesus, the only begotten of the Father, who was God, and the manifestation of God to man. But all doubt on this head will be removed, if we find this very evangelist asserting

* John i. 18.

that it was the Lord Jesus whom Isaiah saw.—Let the reader then turn to John xii. 37, 41, 42. "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.—These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him; nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him." No one can for a moment doubt that the evangelist here speaks of Jesus. But what does he refer to when he says that Esaias saw his glory? He himself determines that point by referring to certain things which Esaias said on the occasion. "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." Now if the reader will return to Is. vi. 10. he will find, that these words were spoken at the time when Isaiah saw the glory of JEHOVAH of hosts. The evangelist gives the sense with some variation of the language; but there is no other passage in the prophecies of Isaiah, nor indeed in the whole of the Old Testament, to which he can be supposed to refer. It is scarcely possible to conceive, therefore, of a more indubitable instance of the name and character of JEHOVAH being given to our Blessed Lord than this.

Again, Is. xlv. 23.—"I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." That it is JEHOVAH who here speaks there cannot be a moment's doubt. He is expressly called so in verse 21. Let this then be compared with Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 12. "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of CHRIST:—for it is written, as I live saith the LORD, every knee

shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God—So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Here the word LORD manifestly corresponds to the name JEHOVAH; and Jesus is in this passage called both Jehovah and God.

Again, Is. xl. 3.—"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord (JEHOVAH): make straight in the desert a high-way for our God." These words, John the Baptist asserts, respected his mission. He said "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."* Now whose way was John the Baptist sent to prepare? Can any one hesitate to answer,—The way of Jesus. He himself returns this answer—"Ye yourselves," said he, "bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him." Christ therefore is that JEHOVAH whose way John was sent to prepare.

Again, Exod. xvii. 2,7.—"And Moses said unto them Why chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? (Jehovah)--"Because they tempted the LORD (Jehovah,) saying, Is the LORD among us or not." And Ps. lxxviii. 18, 56.—"And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust." "Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God." It was God, then, the most high God, who in the Psalm from which the two last passages have been transcribed, is repeatedly called Jehovah. Now let us look to the New Testament explanation of these transactions. 1 Cor. x. 9.—"Neither let us tempt CHRIST, as some of them also tempted,

* John i. 23. Mat. iii. 3.

and were destroyed of serpents." It is manifest that the apostle here represents the Israelites as having tempted Christ in the wilderness; who in the Old Testament is called God and Jehovah. Or if Unitarians insist on supplying the word *God* after the word tempted, instead of the word *him* referring to Christ; still the passage would make the sins of Christians a tempting of Christ, even since the removal of his bodily presence from the world, in the same sense in which the sins of the Israelites in the wilderness were a tempting of Jehovah.

Still further, in Ps. l. 1—6. it is declared that the Mighty God, even JEHOVAH, will come in great glory to judge his people, for that he is Judge himself. Now, in the New Testament, we are again and again informed, that it is the Lord Jesus who is to come with thousands of angels to judge the world. Nor is there any intimation of God the Father coming or appearing for that purpose. On the contrary, it is intimated, as we have already seen, that the invisible God is manifested only by the only begotten Son of the Father. In this passage therefore in Ps. l. we must manifestly understand the coming of the Lord Jesus to be foretold, who is called God and Jehovah. And in that remarkable passage, in which the apostle Jude quotes a prophecy of Enoch, that the Lord was about to come with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment, we must understand on the one hand, according to the doctrine of the Old Testament, the LORD JEHOVAH, the Mighty God; and according to the explanation furnished by the New Testament, the LORD Jesus Christ.

Under this head the number of passages which can be brought forward is necessarily limited,

because, in consequence of the different significations of the word *Kurios, (lord)*, it is necessary to confine ourselves to quotations from the Old Testament, in which the name *Jehovah* occurs. But, from the nature of these quotations, it is evident that the word *Kurios, (lord)*, applied to the Lord Jesus, ought frequently to be understood in the very highest sense which it is capable of bearing. Wherever it is used in a manner in which it might with propriety be understood to refer to God; it ought surely to be regarded as standing in the place of the name JEHOVAH. For example, when *the Lord of glory** is spoken of, or, *the Lord our Saviour*,† or when it is said—"The *Lord* will come with thousands of *his* saints," "Blessed are the dead who die in the *Lord*,"‡ i. e. as explained by the apostle, "the dead in Christ,"§ the word *Lord* should be regarded as the representation of the name *Jehovah*. These are forms of speaking that are frequently used in reference to the supreme God. Such titles as the *God of glory*, *The Father of glory*, *God our Saviour*, as frequently occur, as *The Lord of glory*, and *The Lord our Saviour*; and surely nothing but the most pertinacious adherence to a system, would induce any one to interpret the word *Lord*, in these titles, in an inferior sense, only when they may be determined by the context to be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. Unitarian writers may make light of the title, '*the Lord*' being given to Christ; but, for my part, when I consider how familiar that title is, as a title of God Almighty; how totally alien it is from the style of Scripture, to denominate any creature, in a religious sense, 'The

* 1 Cor. ii. 8. † Tit. i. 4. 2 Pet. i. 11. ‡ Rev. xiv. 13.
§ 1 Thess. iv. 16.

Lord;' when I reflect, that, among the titles given to God, are to be found *the God of glory*, and *God our Saviour;* when I further remember, that the word *Lord* is used in the New Testament as a translation of the name JEHOVAH; I cannot but regard such titles as "*The Lord*," used absolutely, and in a religious sense, or "*The Lord of glory*," or "*The Lord our Saviour*," and others of a similar description, in which the word *Lord* occurs, as being assertions of the supreme Deity of the Redeemer, as unequivocal as could be devised. Such a title as *The Lord*, or the *Lord of glory*, or the *Lord our Saviour*, given to Paul or Peter, or to any of the apostles or prophets, or any of the kings of Judah, convey to my mind the impression of as gross idolatry, as the awful title used by some members of the Church of Rome, "Our Lord God the Pope." As our author quotes the example of heathen poets in justification of such a 'lofty hyperbolical,' title as '*The Mighty God*,' being given to king Hezekiah; it might not be beneath his regard to justify the application of such titles as those mentioned above, to the Saviour, by the example of "the infallible church."

It is further manifest, that when the New Testament determines any instance of the use of the name Jehovah in the Old Testament, to be an application of it to the Messiah, wherever we find the same name given to the same person, we must regard it as a continuation of the application of the name Jehovah to the Messiah.—For example the latter part of Psalm cii. is determined by the New Testament to be an address to the Messiah; from which it obviously follows, that, as the former part of it refers to the same person, who is repeatedly named Jehovah, these also ought to be regarded as in-

stances of this name being given to the Messiah. Again, we have found that the vision of the glory of the Lord of Hosts, which Isaiah saw, has been determined by the New Testament to have been a vision of the glory of the Lord Jesus; from which it follows, that, wherever the same person is spoken of throughout the prophecy, we must understand that it is Jesus who is spoken of. The application of this principle would go far towards establishing the point, that the person who was revealed to the Jews, under the name Jehovah, was none other than the Messiah, appearing as the manifestation of the invisible God to his creatures, conducting that introductory dispensation for the edifying of his church.

I conclude this part of the subject by adducing a passage in which both the titles *God* and *Lord* are addressed to Jesus, in the very highest sense of which they are capable—"Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."* The explanation which Unitarians give of these words is, that they were a mere exclamation of surprise:—that Thomas did not address them to Jesus; but, turning from him, addressed himself, in his astonishment, to God. But what says the evangelist? "Thomas answered and said *unto him*, (Jesus), my Lord and my God." And our Lord received these words as an expression of the faith of Thomas. The other disciples had told him that they had seen the Lord. Thomas declared that he would not believe unless he saw and felt the prints of the nails in his hands, and

* John xx. 27, 28.

the wound in his side. Jesus gave him this satisfaction; and had Thomas then said, 'My Lord,' there would have been no dispute about his meaning. His words would have been understood to convey an expression of his conviction of the truth of Christ's resurrection. But because he adds, 'My God,' Unitarian writers would persuade us, that he does not express his conviction, but his astonishment. Jesus, however, has determined the matter otherwise, by receiving the words of Thomas as the expression of his belief. "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."

CHAP. VII.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD ASCRIBED TO JESUS.

The ascription of the peculiar title and name of the Deity, God and Lord, or Jehovah, to the Redeemer, in so many instances, ought to place the question of his Divine nature beyond dispute. It is not necessary to show that any, much less all, of the attributes of God are specifically ascribed to him. Because if he be God and Jehovah, it follows as a matter of course that all the attributes of God are his attributes. Our author shows that the attributes of Deity are ascribed to God in the Old Testament, in a much greater variety of expression, than we can find in the New Testament, in ascribing them specifically to Jesus; and from this circumstance he infers the inferiority of Jesus to the God revealed in the Old Testament. There would be some force, although not much, in this mode of reasoning, if Jesus were set up as a different, but equal being to the God of the Jews. But our object is to prove that he is the same being, manifested in human nature. All therefore that is necessary is to be able to identify him with the God of the Old Testament. The great object of the Old Testament is to make us thoroughly acquainted with the character of that one, in-

visible, eternal God, who made us, and who is our sovereign ruler; and all the attributes which it describes him as possessing, it connects with those manifestations which he gave of himself to Adam and Abraham and his posterity, especially in that visible glory which, 'dwelt between the cherubims.' The New Testament merely connects these attributes with the man Christ Jesus, intimating however, that it was not the man Christ Jesus that possessed them, but the invisible God dwelling in him. The same caution is given respecting the manifestation of God in the Shechinah or glory in the Tabernacle.—Whilst God is described as dwelling there, or there manifesting himself to his people, he is, at the same time, described as filling heaven and earth with his invisible presence. And no intelligent Israelite could imagine that it was the cloud, or the flame of fire that possessed the attributes ascribed to the Deity; but the invisible God, who manifested himself by these visible things. Just so, the man Christ Jesus was only the outward means by which the Deity chose to manifest his presence; but it was the invisible Deity united to the man, who possessed the attributes of Deity. It is quite preposterous therefore to expect, that the attributes of the Deity should be described, in the New Testament, as fully as they had been described in the Old Testament, merely for the purpose of connecting them with the Lord Jesus Christ. All that was necessary, was to identify the Saviour with the manifestation of the Deity to the Jews. This the Scripture does, as we have already proved, by giving him the same title, GOD, and the same name, JEHOVAH; we have now to show that it ascribes the same attributes and works to him.

INDEPENDENT ETERNAL EXISTENCE.

God alone is described in the Old Testament as possessing independent, eternal existence, and we shall find the same attribute ascribed to the Lord Jesus sometimes in nearly the same terms.

Thus John i. 1, 2.—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the same was in the beginning with God." The application of this passage to Jesus has already been vindicated.* That by the term *beginning* is meant from eternity, is rendered manifest by what follows—"All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." That he had an independent existence is in effect asserted in verse 4th, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." This connected with the declaration, that he was God, can imply nothing less than an independent existence.

Again, Col. i. 17.—"And he," (that is the Son who is called the image of the invisible God, v. 15,) "is before all things, and by him all things consist." This at once declares his eternity and his self existence.

Again, Micah. v. 2.—"But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." This passage is applied to the Saviour by the chief priests and scribes in their answer to Herod's question,† and must be regarded as an unbiassed answer, as it was given before they had contracted any of their preju-

* See chap. vi. above. † Mat. ii. 6.

dices against the Lord Jesus. And this application of it is confirmed by our Lord himself—John vii. 42.—"Hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was." There is no other passage in the Old Testament but that which has been cited from the prophecies of Micah, in which it is foretold that the Messiah was to be of Bethlehem.

Again, Rev. i. 17.—"And he" (i. e. one like the Son of man, v. 13.) "laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the first and the last." ii. 8.—"And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." xxii. 13.—"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

This is a form in which the eternal existence of God is repeatedly declared in the Scriptures. Thus, Is. xli. 4.—"Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD (JEHOVAH) the first and with the last, I am he." xliv. 6.—"Thus saith the LORD (JEHOVAH) the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the LORD (JEHOVAH) of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." And Rev. i. 8.—"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." I have little doubt that the last quotation are the words of the Lord Jesus, who is spoken of in the preceding verse; but as, for very obvious reasons, Unitarians ascribe them to God, who had been previously mentioned, I shall not dispute the point. According even to this view of them, they characterized God by the very same language, by which the Redeemer is characterized.

"He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending." Also, Rev. xxi. 6.—"And he" (he that sat upon the throne, v. 5.) "said unto me, it is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."

It seems to me very extraordinary that our author, while he admits that the passage transcribed above from Rev. xxii. 13. contains the language of the Redeemer, he, at the same time, asserts that the Redeemer is the angel mentioned v. 8, 9., who forbade John to worship him. This would be very wonderful, inasmuch as Jesus at all times received that description of worship which was here offered to him, without scruple. When we produce instances of Christ receiving such worship, Unitarians tell us it was merely a civil respect; and yet they would here persuade us that Jesus refused that civil respect, and directed the apostle to pay his civil respect to God.—Surely they cannot imagine that the apostle proposed to offer *divine* worship to an angel.

This seems to me to be one of the most desperate plunges, to save a hopeless cause, that has ever been attempted. Nothing can be more revolting than the supposition, that a created angel should adopt a style of language in describing himself, which the Creator of heaven and earth employed to describe his own eternity:—"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Nor is there the slightest necessity for adopting so extravagant a hypothesis. The angel who declined the worship offered to him by John, was that angel who is introduced chap. xxi. 9.—"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, come hither, and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." By the Lamb is most assuredly

meant the Lord Jesus. This angel therefore was not the Lord Jesus. But that the Lord Jesus had become the speaker before the words of chap. xxii. 13. is manifest from verse 16.—"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches;"—alluding, without doubt, to the angel who had been sent to show to John the bride the Lamb's wife, the heavenly Jerusalem. A change of speaker therefore plainly takes place at or before the 12th verse, "And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be;" for this is a declaration that never could be made by a messenger, who describes himself to the apostle John, (verse 9.) as, "his fellow-servant, and of his brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book." The description which the Redeemer gives of himself at the commencement of the book runs in the same strain—"I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."* "Behold I come quickly."†—"I will give to every one of you according to your works."‡ It was quite natural that Jesus should conclude the 'revelation' with the same description of himself with which he had commenced it; but can any hypothesis be imagined more monstrous than that Jesus, who, throughout the whole book, is described as the Lamb, who redeemed men by his blood, who received the worship and praises of all the angels, the source of light and happiness to the Heavenly Jerusalem, should be the same with one of those seven angels, who held the seven vials full of the seven last plagues.?

Our author attempts to lower the import of

* Rev. i. 11, 17. ii. 8. † Rev. ii. 5, 16. iii. 11.
‡ Rev. ii. 23. see also verses 5, 10, 16, 17, 22, 23, 28, &c.

the phrase "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending," by comparing it to the expression, Heb. xii. 2.—"The author and finisher of our faith." What he expects to gain by this I know not. Does this character—'the author and finisher of our faith'—necessarily belong to a creature, a mere man? if it be of similar import with, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," to which it has a similarity in sound, if not in sense, and if to be 'the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last,' be an attribute of Deity, would it not follow that to be 'the author and finisher of faith,' must be an attribute of Deity also? And this I am sure is the fact. To acknowledge any mere man, or any mere creature, as 'the author and finisher of our faith,' would be an act of as gross impiety and idolatry, as to acknowledge him as "The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty."

To these passages may be added, John viii. 58.—"Before Abraham *was*, I *am*." I do not mean to rest any argument on the expression *I am*, taken by itself. It occurs repeatedly in this chapter, and is translated *I am he*. Neither shall I argue from its supposed reference to the name by which Jehovah revealed himself to Moses, I I AM THAT I AM. It seems to me very probable that there was such a reference, but I dare not found an argument on that probability.—But the point to which I would call the reader's attention is the singular combination of past and present time. *Before* Abraham *was*, *I am*.—Our author asserts on the authority of Grotius, another Unitarian, that the present is put for the past, *I am*, for *I was;* and then that *I was* will signify only I was the person appointed in the

counsels of God before Abraham. This is a very summary and easy method of getting over a difficulty. One Unitarian asserts that *I am* stands for *I was*, and then other Unitarians, with many commendations of his learning, talent, candour, &c. quote him as authority in all time coming. How is it that no examples are given of this supposed substitution of present for past time? That there are instances in which time is indifferent, and in which, probably, Greek writers would express by a past tense, what in English would be expressed by a present, may be admitted. But to suppose that a present tense should be used in Greek, in which that language itself required a past tense, is a supposition that would throw all language into confusion. How could a judge take the deposition of a witness, if he were allowed to change present into past, and past into present, as might suit his conveniency? It is true also that prophets, in describing scenes that were not to be accomplished till a future age, often describe them as present. The reason is manifest, the scenes were made present to them, as they are to the Divine mind, and they described them accordingly. Perhaps they themselves were not aware that they were describing future events. But can any example be found of a sacred writer's fixing a definite past time, before which he asserts a certain event took place, and using a present tense in his assertion. Can any example be found in Greek, or any other language which has a distinction of tenses, of such a declaration as this, 'Before Solomon was, Abraham is.'

Besides, even if we could be persuaded, that the declaration of Jesus might be rendered, "Before Abraham was, I was," we are conducted

to a proposition that asserts an existence of nearly 2000 years. This is answered by asserting that he might intend to say, that before Abraham was, he existed in the prescience and pre-determination of God. But so did John the Baptist, and Peter, and Paul, so does every man. Jesus had been asked, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" and he answered, "Before Abraham was I am." Had the people understood him to mean that before Abraham was, he was foreknown and predestinated of God, they would have been more disposed to laugh at his evasion of their question, than to be angry with him. But they manifestly understood him to assert, that he was in actual existence before Abraham, and had continued till that time.

Nor is it to be overlooked, that, while this extraordinary form of expression is peculiar to Jesus, it is not the only instance in which he used it. Thus we find him saying, John iii. 13. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that *came* down from heaven, even the Son of man which *is* in heaven."

UNCHANGEABLENESS.

The attribute of unchangeableness is ascribed to the Saviour, in a passage which we have already vindicated as referring to him, Heb. i. 11, 12. "They shall perish, but thou remainest, and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." No Israelite, as our author well observes, could conceive of any other being described in these words, than "his own Jehovah;" but here they are employed to

describe the glory of the Son, who is therefore the Jehovah of the Israelites.

Again, chap. xiii. 8, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." These words are so express, that we may well wonder at the hardihood that should attempt to extract any other sense from them, than that which they obviously convey. Nothing, however, is too formidable for Unitarian critics to dash at. The Unitarian version says, in a note, "Jesus Christ, that is, the evangelical doctrine delivered by Christ and his apostles." Here, the name Jesus Christ is first supposed to include the apostles, and then the whole are transformed into the doctrine taught by them. But even this does not satisfy these critics; and therefore with the help of a few additional words they make it, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day, will also be the same for ever." What might not be accomplished by such a system?

Our author simply asserts that this text "is not intended to teach us any thing about the person of our Lord." Why? "Because it is found amidst a series of moral instructions, and forms part of an exhortation to be steadfast in the faith." This really is beneath criticism: that the obvious sense of the words of Scripture should be set aside, because the author cannot see the connexion of them with the context. Any one, who looks at the passage with an unprejudiced eye, will see at once the bearing of these words, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." The apostle reminds the Hebrews of the unchangeableness of the Saviour, when he exhorts them to fol-

low the faith of those who had closed their career by martyrdom. Although many who had the rule over them had been removed, yet Jesus abideth for ever. It is because he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, that we can trust him for the fulfilment of his promises.

The sense which our author gives to the words is, as usual, figurative; and also, as usual, on the authority of some notable critic, or rather the admission of some notable Trinitarian. Dr. Whitby, he tells us, puts this gloss on the words, "Jesus Christ, who, both as to his doctrines and his promises, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Dr. Whitby, it is to be remarked, is said to have abjured his opinions respecting the doctrine of the divine nature of the Redeemer, and thereby became popular among Unitarians. He never was esteemed by Evangelical Christians as sound in the faith. He went out from them, because he never was of them. He was however a learned and able man; and, in matters of fact and criticism, his commentary is highly useful. His gloss on this passage is manifestly imperfect, for the apostle is not contrasting the doctrine of Christ with that of the former guides of the Hebrews, but the permanency and unchangeableness of his existence with the mutability of all earthly teachers. Yet, even admitting his explanation to contain all that the apostle meant, it is very obvious that, if Jesus be unchangeable as to the fulfilment of his promises, he must be equally unchangeable in his being, his power, his purposes, his love, his faithfulness—in short, in all those attributes which are necessary to secure the fulfilment of promises, in the most remote periods of future existence.

OMNIPRESENCE.

One passage in which omnipresence is ascribed to the Redeemer, is commented on by our author, as if it were the only passage to that effect; Matt. xviii. 20. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them:" to which we may add Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." The comment is as follows;

"If Christ be possessed of that attribute in the sense in which it is ascribed to the Deity, it had been superfluous to say that he would be present with two or three who were assembled for a particular purpose—when, by the very necessity of his nature, he must be present at all times, and on all occasions, not with his disciples only, but with Jews and Gentiles."*

The direct reply to this is, that similar declarations are made respecting God in the Old Testament. "In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee."† "For thus saith the high and lofty one, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." According to our author's judgment, these, and similar declarations are superfluous, because God is in every place, and they may therefore be blotted from the Bible. But, is it not by such passages that the omnipresence of God is taught in Scripture? And is it not thus that the omnipresence

* Page 28, or 2d Edit. page 34. † Exod. xx. 24.

of Christ is to be taught also? But our author proceeds,

"To understand the expression literally involves one of two great errors, either that Christ did not ascend to heaven, but still remains on earth; or that he descends from heaven really and corporeally, whenever two or three are gathered together in his name. Moreover it contains a virtual denial that in heaven, his dwelling place, he presides over his church and people; though God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power; and gives up one of the strongest arguments against the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist; a concession for which Mr. Maguire will, no doubt, be grateful."

Can any thing be conceived more puerile than all this? The omnipresence of Christ involves nothing whatever about his either ascending to heaven, or descending from it corporeally; but simply that he is present with his people in the same sense in which the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob promised to be with those who worshipped him according to his appointment. Neither is it a virtual denial that heaven is his dwelling place. When Solomon said, in his beautiful prayer at the dedication of the temple, "And will God *in very deed* dwell with man upon the earth?" so far from intending any denial that heaven was his dwelling place, he said, in almost the same breath, that the heaven of heavens could not contain him. Nor is there here any concession respecting the corporeal presence of Christ in the Eucharist. If Jesus was a manifestation of God in human nature, his being every where present does not imply that his human nature is every where present, any more than the omnipresence of the Deity implies that the Shechinah, or ancient symbol of the Divine presence, is every where present.

Our author therefore pleads, as usual, for a

metaphorical presence, on the authority of great critics.

"Our Lord," says he, "makes no claim to ubiquity; nor are his words intended to convey any idea of his being personally, but virtually present. *Adesse alicui dicitur qui ei favet auxiliumque præbet. (He is said to be present to any one who befriends him, and affords him assistance.)* This is the observation of Grotius; who further observes, that our Lord's declaration is very similar to a declaration of the Jews, 'Where two sit discoursing concerning the law, the Shechinah, or symbol of the divine presence, is among them.'"

But even admitting this virtual presence, how could Jesus befriend every two or three of his disciples met together in his name, and afford them assistance, if he were not really present with them, to witness them, and to act on their behalf? The Jewish saying quoted by Grotius is a very beautiful illustration of our doctrine, for which I feel myself much indebted to our author. It is an expression of their faith in the real presence of that God, who manifested himself to their fathers in the Shechinah; and is perfectly parallel with the faith which every two or three disciples of Christ, met together in his name, are called to exercise in the real presence of the same God, who was manifested in the man Christ Jesus.

Another passage, in which the omnipresence of Christ is distinctly taught, we have in John, xiv. 23. "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and *we* will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "*We* will come." Who? The Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Surely, if there be meaning in language, the meaning of this is, that Jesus Christ will come and abide with those that love him, in the same sense in which God

the Father will be with them. Nor can this be referred to a future state, for the declaration is in answer to a question put by Judas, (not Iscariot) "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" The answer is, that the Father and Jesus would come to those that love the Lord Jesus, and manifest themselves to them, by dwelling in them and blessing them.

To break the force of such passages as these, and to induce us to cast away the strength and comfort which the Lord Jesus provides for us, in the assurance that he is always present with us, we are reminded that it is said, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them;" and again, that it is said of Abel—"That he, being dead, yet speaketh;" and we are asked if Moses and the prophets and Abel were omnipresent. This is a sort of quibbling that is altogether unworthy of a sacred subject. "Moses and the prophets," is, by one of the most common figures of speech, used to express the writings of Moses and the prophets, which were present with them, and is thus explained by our Lord himself, John v. 45—47. Abel also, being dead, yet speaketh in the record that is left of his history, which was also really present with them. But is there any thing here that can be compared with the declaration of Jesus, that he would be present with his disciples, to procure for them whatever they should agree in asking?

We are reminded also of the language of the apostle Paul, "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already *as though I were present.*"* A cause of gross

* 1 Cor. v. 3.

scandal had occurred in the Corinthian church, and the apostle exhorts that church to expel the offender: and he tells the Corinthians that, although he could not be personally present with them, yet that they had his full consent and authority, nay, injunction, as an inspired apostle, to inflict the sentence of excommunication on the person who had occasioned the scandal: that he would thus be present in spirit or mind with them, in this particular instance, although he was personally absent. But can this be seriously compared with the general declaration of Jesus, when he was about to ascend to heaven, "Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world?"

Another passage of a similar description is alluded to, Col. ii. 5. "Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." The apostle here intimates that although they had never seen him personally, (v. 1.) and although he was still personally absent, yet that, in thought and affection, he was with them, rejoicing in the order and steadfastness which he knew to exist among them. This is a form of speech that could not deceive, and I believe never did deceive any one. But the declarations respecting the presence of the Lord Jesus to his people in all ages, especially when combined with the other divine attributes ascribed to him, and the promises made by him, could not but persuade, and in point of fact have persuaded multitudes, who have testified the sincerity of their faith, by bearing torture and death rather than compromise it, that Jesus was really, although not corporeally present with them at all times.

Perhaps the most effectual method of exposing the fallacy of the mode of reasoning adopted by

our author on this subject, is to show that his arguments equally affect the omnipresence of him whom he acknowledges as God. He brings forward several sublime passages of the Old Testament, in which the omnipresence of God is described in "the lofty and glowing style" of sacred poetry. But how easy would it be, for a man who had persuaded himself that the real omnipresence of God is contrary to reason and common sense, by adopting our author's system of criticism, to get rid of all these descriptions. He would commence by pleading, that much allowance must be made for the hyperbolical style of oriental poetry. If, he might say, the orientals could use figures so extravagant, in plain prose, as our author ascribes to them, what might not be expected from their poetical compositions? He might then proceed to show, that nothing more was meant by these descriptions, than a *virtual* omnipresence of Deity, namely, that he was every where present by his law and his authority, as a king is said to be present over all his dominions, to maintain order and protect his people from injury. "Am not I a God at hand, saith Jehovah, and not a God afar off?" That is, he would say, my law and authority are at hand to every one to punish his disobedience; as is explained in the next clause, "Can any one hide himself in secret places, so that I shall not see him?" That is, can any one elude the vengeance of my law? "Do not I fill the heavens and the earth?" By the earth, he would say, is meant the land of Judea, and by the heavens, the church; so that the meaning of this is, that his law and authority extended throughout the land of Judea, both in regard to its civil and ecclesiastical institutions. "If they dig down to the grave, thence shall my

hand take them; if they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down." This, he would say, is a key to the whole mystery. It is equivalent to the common proverb, that kings have long arms. Any eastern prince would use this language, without meaning any thing more by it, than that no man who incurred his displeasure could escape his vengeance.

It is quite unnecessary to pursue such a mode of commenting on Scripture. The author must see, that a very little ingenuity would enable any one to reply to any conceivable statement of the omnipresence of God, by arguments of precisely the same nature—texts of the same description, with those which he employs to combat the evidence for the omnipresence of the Redeemer. The language in which the attribute of omnipresence is specifically ascribed to the Lord Jesus, in the New Testament, although not so lofty and glowing as the poetical descriptions of the Old Testament, being simple declarations in prose, is not the less satisfactory.

OMNISCIENCE.

The attribute of omniscience is frequently ascribed to the Saviour. Thus, Rev. ii. 23. "I (Jesus) am he which searcheth the reins and hearts." These are the very words in which the omniscience of Jehovah is asserted. Thus, 1 Kings viii. 39. "For thou, *even thou only*," says Solomon in his prayer to Jehovah, "knowest the hearts of all the children of men." 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. "For the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." Psalm vii. 9. "For the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins." Prov. xvii. 3. "The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace

for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts." Jer. xi. 20. "But, O Lord of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart." And chap. xvii. 10. "I, the LORD, search the heart; I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways." Nothing, therefore, can be more manifest than, that, by the phrase, trying or searching the heart and reins, is meant thoroughly and perfectly knowing the inmost thoughts of man; and that it is the attribute of God only, thus to know what is in man. Now, I cannot conceive of a more perfect identification than that which Christ makes of himself with God, in his words which have been quoted.—Jeremiah writes, "I, JEHOVAH, search the heart; I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways." The Lord Jesus says, "*I am he* which searcheth the reins and hearts," (intimating that there is but one who does so) "and I will give to every one of you according to your works."

Our author says, this is a "striking instance of the summary mode in which orthodoxy rushes to her conclusions. It is quite enough that the same thing be affirmed of two beings to constitute their identity, though their characters and offices are perfectly distinct. God searches the heart, and Christ searches the heart, therefore they are the same."* But this is a palpable misrepresentation of the argument. Fools as we may be esteemed, none of us would be so absurd as to reason thus, "God exists, and man exists, therefore man is God." Our argument is, that it is the prerogative of God only to search the heart and try the reins, and again and again declared to be his prerogative; and therefore,

* Page 41, 2d Edit.

that, when Jesus claims this prerogative, he identifies himself with God.

He adds, "Every examinator, in a judicial capacity, searches the heart of the accused." Not in the Scripture sense of the phrase, which signifies perfectly and thoroughly knowing the secrets of the heart. And I believe that a judge, whom the author should announce as one who could search the hearts and try the reins of persons accused at his bar, would be regarded as a very extraordinary personage; or our author would be regarded as having spoken very absurdly and impiously respecting him.

He further observes, that some of the ancient prophets were endowed with faculties for discerning the secret springs of action, through the thickest veil of hypocrisy—that Ahijah knew the thoughts of Jeroboam's wife, Elisha the thoughts of Gehazi, &c. It is, doubtless, true, that God has revealed particular thoughts of certain individuals to his servants; but can the author find a single instance of any prophet or apostle who knew all the thoughts of any one man, or of all the men with whom they had intercourse? Or can he find in the whole Bible any individual judge, or king, or prophet, or apostle, of whom it is said generally, and without limitation, that he could search the hearts and try the reins? And if not, why quibble about the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, being revealed to Daniel, and the hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira revealed to Peter?

This declaration respecting our Lord's omniscience is in perfect conformity with other intimations respecting him. Thus, John ii. 24, 25. "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men; and needed not

that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man." Could these assertions be made respecting any mere man? Again, Matt. xii. 25. "And Jesus knew their thoughts." To the same effect, Luke vi. 8. Again, John vi. 61. "Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured." We have a beautiful exemplification of the practical use of the doctrine of our Lord's omniscience, in the appeal which Peter made to it. Jesus said to him, once, and again, and a third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" Peter, remembering his sad fall, was grieved because Jesus said to him the third time, "Lovest thou me?" and answered, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."* What more beautiful, or more appropriate appeal could any one make to the God of heaven than this, "LORD, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee?" Or who, without the most palpable idolatry, could address such language to a fellow-creature? The apostle Paul says, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." And, amidst the evil surmisings or accusations of the world, even under the recollection of imperfections, and falls into sin that bore the appearance of a denial of the Saviour, we can, blessed be the Lord, appeal, like Peter, to his perfect knowledge of our hearts, and still say, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that we love thee."

The only other remark of our author's on this topic, deserving of notice, is his citing the text, Mark xiii. 32., which shall be considered in a future chapter.

* John xxi. 15—17.

OMNIPOTENCE.

The omnipotence of Christ is to be inferred chiefly from the works that are ascribed to him, which will form the subject of the next chapter. But we have seen that he is called by the prophet Isaiah, "The mighty God," a title which manifestly implies omnipotence.

I WOULD observe, in conclusion, that the possession of any one of these attributes would prove our Lord to be the true God. For no one, besides God, possesses eternal, independent existence, or unchangeableness, or omnipresence, or omniscience, or omnipotence. And it would be very extraordinary if any one of these attributes, even in a single passage, were ascribed to any creature, in a book which is so peremptory on the subject of idolatry. But how incredible is it that, not one, but each of these attributes separately, and that, not in one, but several passages, should be ascribed to Jesus in the plainest, broadest terms, frequently in the very language in which the same attribute is ascribed to the Deity, if it were intended to exhibit him as nothing more than a man, or a created angel? And when, to the ascription of each of these attributes, is added the title *God*, nay, and the proper name JEHOVAH, again and again given to him, nothing, it would seem, but the most determined incredulity could prevent any one from acknowledging him, as "The true God and eternal life."

CHAP. VIII.

THE WORKS OF GOD ASCRIBED TO JESUS.

The attributes of God are made known chiefly by the works which are ascribed to him in the sacred Scriptures. The first sentence of the Bible, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," speaks volumes respecting the eternity, the power and the wisdom of the Deity. So all the divine attributes ascribed to the Redeemer will receive new confirmation, if we find works ascribed to him, to the performance of which these attributes are absolutely essential.

THE CREATION OF ALL THINGS.

The creation of all things is ascribed to the Redeemer, in that passage which we have already vindicated from our author's attempt to make it speak, not of Christ, but of a Divine attribute. John i. 3.—"All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." Our author would render this, "All things were done by or through its (wisdom's) influence." He would farther confine *all things*, to all things relative to the Christian dispensation, because, says he, quoting the Unitarian version, the word εγενετο (*egeneto*), trans-

lated *made* in the common version, will not admit of the sense of *create* as referring to the material system; γινομαι (*ginomai*) occurs upwards of seven hundred times in the New Testament, but never in this sense. Had our author examined the foundation of this statement, he would have felt himself compelled to qualify it. This word is used James iii. 9.—"Men that are *made*, (*gegonotas*) after the image of God;" thus corresponding to the word create in the Old Testament. Again, Heb. xi. 3.—"The things which *are seen* were *not made* (*gegonenai*) of things which do appear." In the lxx. Greek it is frequently employed to translate the Hebrew word rendered *create*. Thus, Gen. ii. 4., "When they (i. e. the heavens and the earth) were created" (*egeneto.*) Exod. xxxiv. 10., "Which have not been *done* (Heb. *created*) in all the earth." Is. xlviii. 7., "They are created now, and not from the beginning." In the passage transcribed above from the book of Genesis, the word is used to express the production or creation of the heavens and the earth: and it is because this book contains a history of *creation*, that it is called in the Greek *Genesis*. Even in this very chapter, in which the Unitarian translators would lower the signification of the word, it occurs in a passage in which it must refer to creation.—Our author and they would render verse 3d—"all things were done by him;" but in verse 10th the same word occurs again, where this rendering will not do—"The world, (*kosmos* not *æon*) was made by him." How would it sound to say, "The world was *done* by him?" The truth is, that the word is one of a higher description than the word usually rendered to create. It signifies *to produce*, to *bring into existence*; and furnishes a more vivid idea of bringing

out of nothing, than even the words rendered *to make* or *to create.*

But we may pass this objection, and produce a passage in which the word *ktizo (I create)* is used. Col. i. 16.—" For by him (the Son) all things were *created*, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were *created* by him, and for him." Our author's comment is as follows.

" The author thinks it might be shown from the context, that the moral and religious, not the physical creation, is to be understood here; that new creation which was effected by the introduction of the Gospel, both in the civil and ecclesiastical polities of the Jews. In the language of Scripture, and particularly in that of the prophets, the terms earth and heaven are employed to represent these two states. The apostle tells us, in a preceding verse, that " we have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his (God's) dear Son, whom he denominates the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature;" for, or because, in εν (not by) him were all things relative to the Gospel dispensation created or constituted anew.

" Observe he does not speak of Christ as the prophets speak of Jehovah. He does not say, as Moses says of the Father Almighty, that ' in the beginning he created the heavens and the earth.' Nor with David, ' that the heavens were made by his word, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth; that he hath prepared the light and the sun, and telleth the number of the stars.' Nor with Job, that ' he hangeth the earth upon nothing, that he maketh Arcturus, Orion, and the Pleiades, and that the pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof.' Nor with Isaiah, ' that he sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that he has measured the waters in the

hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.' Nor with Jeremiah, 'that he has made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by his great power; that he giveth the sun for a light by day and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night.'—Nor with Nahum, 'that he hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.' The apostle makes no such declarations of Christ, but he says, "that in him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth;" and then he intimates what we are to understand by *all things*, not the sun and stars, and man and beast, but states and conditions of things —thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers.

"The words, 'all things,' are of frequent occurrence in Scripture, and their meaning must be limited by their connexion. The Psalmist in his beautiful eulogy on man, says—'God hath put all things under his feet," meaning that he has given him extensive power over both animate and inanimate nature. Paul says, (Phil. iv. 13.,) 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,' meaning, that he can bear all afflictions and reverses of fortune with patience and content. Again he informs us, (Eph. i. 22.,) 'That God has given Christ to be head over all things to the Church,' and (in Heb i. 3.,) 'That he upholds all things by the word of his power;' thus affirming that Christ orders or conducts the whole of the Gospel dispensation, by virtue of the authority imparted to him by the Almighty."*

On this critique I request the readers attention to the few following following observations.

1. Our author's first object is to lower the sense of the words earth and heaven, to the civil and ecclesiastical polities of the Jews. He

* Page 37, Ed. 2d.

asserts that in the language of Scripture, and particularly the prophets, the terms earth and heaven are employed to represent these two states. It is true, that in some of those prophecies, which are conveyed in a kind of hieroglyphic language, that they might not be fully understood till the event explained them, it is supposed by some commentators, that, by heaven, is meant the church, and by the earth the civil state. This however is by no means certain. But to attempt to explain the historical and didactic parts of the New Testament, by the darkest of the prophecies, is an operation highly characteristic of Unitarian criticism. No better method could be adopted for converting the whole Bible into a book of hieroglyphics, from which common sense and reason might be at liberty to select their own tenets.

2. The author never seems to have considered that by lowering the meaning of the words *earth and heaven* in this passage, he lays the foundation for lowering them also in the passages by which he would prove that all things were created by God. He tells us that, in the language of Scripture, and *particularly in that of the prophets*, these terms signify the ecclesiastical and political states of the Jews. And then he cites passages from these very prophets, in which he would have us to understand the same words literally. But what is the reply to this? If by *heaven and earth* we are to understand ecclesiastical and civil polity any where, it must be in these passages from the prophets. Thus, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," i. e. he arranged the ecclesiastical and civil polity of the Jews. "The heavens were made by his word," i. e. he arranged the eccle-

siastical polity of the Jews by his word, and "all the host of them by the breath of his mouth;" i. e. he appointed the various ministers and officers of it. "He hath prepared the light and the sun, and telleth the number of the stars," i. e. he appointed the king, who, in prophetical language, is described as the sun, with his inferior princes, the stars. "He hangeth the earth upon nothing," i. e. the civil polity of the Jews was formed out of nothing, and depends upon no other civil polity. He maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades: these must be some particular offices with which we are now unacquainted. "The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof." That is, the chief authorities in the church are under his controul: and, as we are told by Paul, (Gal. ii. 9.,) that 'James, Cephas, and John seemed to be pillars,' this may be a prediction of some reproof which they were to receive; and accordingly, we find that these apostles particularly were reproved by Jesus—James and John, when they suggested to him to call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans; and Peter, when he would have persuaded him not to submit to crucifixion. The same description of running comment may obviously be carried through all the passages quoted by our author.

3. The criticism on the preposition εν *(in)* is very far from being candid. When our author said εν *(in)* (not by,) he ought, in common fairness, to have mentioned that this preposition is frequently used in the sense of *by*. Thus, Luke iv. 1.—"And was led by (εν) the Spirit into the wilderness." The same sense is expressed by Matthew, by the preposition ὑπο. Acts xx. 19.—"Temptations which befel me *by* (εν) the lying

in wait of the Jews." Mat. ix. 34.—"He casteth out Devils *through* (εν) by the prince of the Devils." Mark xii. 36.—"For David himself said *by* (εν) the Holy Ghost." Acts iv. 9.—"*By* (εν) what means he is made whole." Mat. xvii. 21.—"This kind goeth not out but *by* (εν) prayer and fasting." Mark xiv. 1.—"How they might take him *by* (εν) craft."* He ought also to have told his readers, that, in this very passage, the word διὰ *(through)* is used as equivalent to εν *(in)*. "All things were created *by* him"—not εν, as in the preceding clause, but διὰ *(through,)* as the cause or agent. The reader therefore must not suppose that the translation "created *by* him," is an erroneous or even *unusual* translation.

4. Our author, as we have already remarked, quotes many expressions from the Old Testament, descriptive of the power of God, which, he says, the apostle does not use with regard to the Lord Jesus. It is true that the apostle does not transcribe into this one text a large portion of the Old Testament. There is little or no poetry in the New Testament; and therefore poetical description is not to be expected. But it says in plain prose, That "by the Word, who was made flesh, all things were made; that without him was not any thing made that was made." That "the world was made by him." "That by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth visible and invisible," and that he "in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and that the heavens are the works of his hands." And this ought surely to be ac-

* See Schleusner's lexicon, where other passages to the same effect are mentioned.

counted sufficient for the ascription of one work to the Redeemer, in a book in which brevity is so much studied as the New Testament, and which treats of so great a variety of subjects.

5. Our author totally omits in his comment, two most important and emphatic words of the text, namely, *visible and invisible.* What is the import of these words? Where are the visible thrones and dominions, and principalities and powers, which Christ created? To explain these of the petty governments of Judea, would be absolutely ludicrous. To explain them of the governments of the whole world, would be to acknowledge the Redeemer as the God of Providence at least, if not of Creation. And where are the invisible thrones and dominions, and principalities and powers? Are they to be understood of ecclesiastical officers on earth? How then are they invisible? and how would such offices accord with our author's ideas of the constitution of the church? Are they in heaven? What more dignified station can be given to the Saviour than the creator of all such ranks and dignities, both in heaven and on earth? How could he more emphatically be declared to be the God of Providence?

I conceive however that by all things visible in heaven and in earth, must be meant all material things; and that by all invisible things in heaven and earth must be meant all spiritual things. For this is the distinction between visible and invisible things as explained by this apostle himself, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18., "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things *which*

are seen, but at things *which are not seen*; for *the things which are seen* are temporal; but *the things which are not seen* are eternal."* There is no instance in the whole Bible of a moral creation or renovation, or of the institution of mere offices, being described by such language as, the *creation* of all things in heaven and on earth, visible, as well as invisible.

The thrones, dominions and principalities and powers mentioned, seem to be connected particularly with the word invisible, as these are terms frequently employed to describe angelic natures, good as well as evil. Thus, Rom. viii. 38.—"Neither angels nor principalities nor powers." Eph. vi. 12.—"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world." Eph. i. 20, 21.—"He raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come." There are other passages to the same effect.

6. We admit that the words *all things* are to be interpreted by their connexion. And what is their connexion here? Is it possible to conceive of a more extensive connexion—"All things in heaven and on earth visible and invisible." What conceivable thing can be exempted from this description? And yet the creation of all these things is ascribed to the Lord Jesus.

Our author has, as in a former instance, a re-

* See also Rom. i. 20., and Heb. xi. 3.

serve at hand, to cover his retreat at least, in the event of his finding the interpretation of this passage which he offers, untenable. This, as in the former instance, betrays his want of confidence in it.

"Even granting," says he, "that Christ was the creator of the material frame of nature, he was only the agent of omnipotence. The very verse preceding the passage quoted, to prove him possessed of that attribute, demonstrates the contrary. It denominates him the *image* of the invisible God—the first born of every creature. The *image*—therefore not the reality—*born*, therefore not self-existent—consequently dependent—therefore not omnipotent."

On the subject of Christ, acting as the agent of omnipotence, I shall have occasion in a future chapter to offer some observations: I shall therefore omit it for the present.

Our author pleads that, because Jesus is said to be the image of God, he could not be really God. From this it would follow that his being "*made in the likeness of men*," and being "found in fashion as a man,"* must imply that he was not really a man. This inference however does not follow in either case. His being the image of God signifies, that he is to us the manifestation or representation of God. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."†

He further infers from the expression '*first born*,' that being *born*, he must be dependent.—Even if the word, rendered first born, implied that he was really born, this would not follow; for, in that case, the word must be used in some figurative sense, denoting his connexion with the

* Phil. ii. 8.

† John i. 18.

Father, which necessarily is as much beyond our comprehension, as the emanation of the soul of Adam from the Creator, when he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. But it is obvious that Jesus cannot be called the *first born* of every creature, in the sense of being the first progeny of every creature. And the phrase, 'first born of every creature,' I apprehend, will not bear the signification of, born before every creature.— The first born of any one signifies, not his elder brother, but his first born child. The first born of Jacob was, not Esau his elder brother, nor is he ever called so, but Reuben his eldest son.—

The word rendered *first born* was in common use among the Jews to signify the *Lord* or *proprietor;* because the first born son was heir or Lord of the family property. The Jewish Rabbins, Michaelis tells us, use the word in this sense even when, speaking of God. They call even God the *first born* of the world; expressing thereby that he is Lord or proprietor of the world. So Jesus is here called first born of every creature, because he is the Lord or proprietor of every creature, "the heir of all things."*

I would conclude this long critique upon this passage of Scripture, by simply asking the ques-

* Heb. i. 2. Another interpretation of the word rendered *first born*, πρωτοτοκος, has been proposed, which claims respect from the names that have countenanced it, namely, Isidore, a native Greek, Erasmus, and Michaelis; who understand it actively, not *first born*, but *first producer*. This interpretation requires merely the change of the accent, and as accents were not used in the ancient manuscripts, involves no change in the text. The words would then be—"The first producer of every creature, for by him all things were created," &c. There are, however, strong objections to this rendering, and although it has been adopted by good commentators, I prefer that which is given above.

tion, whether any Unitarian, not knowing who was specifically alluded to in the words of this text, would hesitate for a moment to understand them as referring to Almighty God? "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." I ask whether their consciences would not revolt from the thought of using such language respecting Moses, through whose ministrations the Jewish civil and ecclesiastical polity was really established; or Paul, by whom the Gentile churches were first constituted? The words seem to me to set forth the true the omnipotent God, as clearly as it is in the power of language to express.

Other passages in which the work of creation is ascribed to the Redeemer, have already been alluded to. John i. 10.—"The world" (*kosmos*, not æon,) "was made by him." Heb. i. 10.—"Thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands." The application of these words to the Saviour has already been vindicated. Does our author object to one passage that the proper term create is not used in it, we offer him a passage, Col. i. 16., in which that word is used. Does he object that there it is only, all things in heaven and earth, and not the heavens and the earth themselves, we produce to him another passage, Heb. i. 10., in which the creation of the heavens and the earth are most distinctly ascribed to Jesus. If this will not satisfy him, we can but pray that his eyes may be opened to the truth.

PROVIDENCE.

Not only is the Redeemer asserted to have created all things, but to sustain and control and regulate all things. Thus, Col. i. 17.—"By him all things" (all things that are in heaven and that are in earth visible and invisible) "consist." Heb. i. 3.—"Who (i. e. the Son) being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and *upholding all things by the word of his power*," &c. Mat. xxviii. 18, 19, 20—"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, and, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 26—"When he (Christ) shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.—For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy shall be destroyed—death." Eph. i. 22.—"And he" (the God of our Lord Jesus Christ) "hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." The sense in which Christ derives this authority from God, the Father of glory, will be considered in a future chapter: what is here to be noticed is, that the government of all things is committed to him for the advancement of his church. Rev. ii. and iii. throughout—"Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works: or else, *I*," (Jesus previously described), "will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." "Notwithstanding *I* have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, to teach and seduce my servants. Behold *I* will cast her into a bed and them that

commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And *I* will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know, that *I* am he that searcheth the reins and hearts, and *I* will give unto every one of you according to your works." "If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, *I* will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour *I* will come upon thee." "Behold *I* will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie: Behold *I* will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that *I* have loved thee." "*I* know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, *I* will spue thee out of my mouth." "As many as *I* love *I* rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent." Now, I ask, could God himself assume a more authoritative tone in addressing the churches than Christ here does in his own name? Many of the threatenings contained in these verses, particularly that of removing the candlestick of one of the Asiatic churches out of its place, that is, taking from it the ordinances of the Gospel, so that it should cease from being a church, have already been accomplished. And how have these threats been accomplished? By arrangements of divine providence. By the irruptions of foreign invaders, and other means which are at the command and disposal of no one but the God of Providence. It would be difficult to imagine more express terms in which the direction of providential events could be claimed by the Redeemer, than this general assertion, in reference to the churches, or rather in reference to all mankind—"As many as *I* love *I* rebuke and chasten."

JUDGMENT.

The judgment of the world, and the rendering to every man according to his deeds, are frequently claimed by God as his exclusive prerogatives. Deut. xxxii. 36.—"For the LORD (Jehovah) shall judge his people." 1 Sam. ii. 10.—"The LORD (Jehovah) shall judge the ends of the earth." 1 Chron. xvi. 33.—"Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD (Jehovah) because he *cometh* to judge the earth." Ps. l. 3, 4., "Our God *shall come* and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people." Ps. xcvi. 12, 13.—"Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the LORD (Jehovah): for *he cometh* to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." xcviii. 8, 9.—"Let the hills be joyful together before the LORD (Jehovah) for *he cometh* to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity."

Now, let these passages be compared with the following, which are but a selection from many of the same description. Mat. xvi. 27.—"For the son of man *shall come* in the glory of his Father, with *his* angels; and then *he* shall reward every man according to his works." xxv. 31, 32.—"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before *him* shall be gathered all nations, and *he* shall separate them one from another, as a shep-

herd divideth his sheep from the goats," &c.—xxvi. 64.—"I, (Jesus,) say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and *coming* in the clouds of heaven." John v. 22.—"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." 2 Cor. v. 10. —"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Thess. i. 7—"When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with *his* mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God—who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord,"—(What Lord?) "and from the glory of his power." Rev. i. 7—"Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him."

Let Unitarians consider these two classes of sacred texts, the one class from the Old Testament, describing God and Jehovah as *coming* to judgment, and the other class from the New Testament, describing the Lord Jesus as *coming* for the same purpose, and with the same insignia of majesty; and then let them say whether the following passages belong to Jehovah or to Jesus. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."* "For we know him that hath said

* 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

vengeance belongeth to me, I will recompense saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people."* "As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God."† "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all."‡ I think I may appeal to the candour of Unitarians to admit, that they would find some difficulty in determining whether the word *Lord*, in these passages, was intended to designate the eternal God, or the Lord Jesus; and that different individuals of them might determine differently:—some applying the word Lord to God, and others applying the same word, in the same instances of its occurrence, to the Lord Jesus Christ.—And I would ask them further, is it conceivable that the great God of heaven, and any of his creatures should be spoken of in Scripture, in reference to an event of such paramount importance as the judging of the world, in terms so perfectly alike, that it is impossible to determine when we are to understand them of the Creator, and when of the creature?

RAISING OF HIMSELF AND OTHERS FROM THE DEAD.

John ii. 19—"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up—He spake of the temple of his body." Our Lord here claims a power so utterly out of the sphere of any creature's power, that were there not another passage in the Scripture to the same effect, we could not but regard him

* Heb. x, 30. † Rom. xiv. 11, 12. ‡ Jude 14, 15.

as using a language which God alone could use with truth. x. 17—"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." He had power in himself—the commandment he received from his Father.—The import of the latter clause shall be considered afterwards. John v. 28, 29—"For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his," (the Son of man's) "voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." xi. 25—"Jesus said unto her (Martha) *I* am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." 1 Cor. xv. 22. 45—"For as in" (rather by) "Adam all die, even so in" (rather by) "Christ shall all be made alive."

It is manifest that these all are works peculiar to God Almighty, and could not be effected but by the exercise of Divine attributes. The explanation that is given of the ascription of such works as these to the Redeemer is, that he acted only as the agent of omnipotence, by a delegated power and authority. It is not denied that he acted as the representative of the Deity in all his works—as the manifestation of the invisible God to his creatures: and that, in those works which are connected with the recovery of mankind, or the condemnation of the wicked, he acted as the servant of God: which will be more fully explained in a future chapter.

But, in the mean time, let us for a moment consider the nature of the works that are dele-

gated to Jesus. Delegated authority cannot confer qualifications: and if the qualifications requisite for the work that is delegated are omnipotence, omniscience, and the other attributes of the Deity, it is in vain to speak of such works being delegated to a mere creature. He who is delegated must previously be in possession of the qualifications necessary for executing the works intrusted to him; and when these works are creation, providence, the government of the world, the exercise of all power in heaven and in earth, the raising of the dead, the judging of the world—works which the Lord God Almighty repeatedly challenges as peculiarly his own, the delegated person must be in possession of Divine attributes. What folly would it be to speak of a mere man delegated to create the universe, to try the reins and search the hearts of all men, so as to judge the world, and to bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil? And, if it be absurd to suppose such works, to be delegated to a mere man, it must be equally absurd to suppose them to be intrusted to any creature.

But, it may be asked, could not God communicate power and qualifications for such works? I answer, there are powers which, like the name Jehovah, are incommunicable; and that such are the attributes of the Deity. To suppose that God could communicate such attributes as omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience, is to suppose that he could convert a creature into the Creator. Can any thing be more revolting to that very common sense to which we are required to accommodate the Scripture, than an almighty, omnipresent, omniscient creature?—Or, what is the same in other words, two om-

nipresent almighty beings, and yet the one a creature, and dependent on the other?*

I conclude therefore that, as the Lord Jesus was delegated to the fulfilment of these works—that, as God made the worlds by him, governs them by him, and will judge his rational and moral creatures by him, he must be in possession of attributes competent to the fulfilment of these works—that is, he must be God, as he is explicitly declared to be. There are two senses in which he is the agent or representative or delegate of the Deity. The first is, that it is by him, as one of the persons of the Godhead, that the invisible God is manifested to the universe. That eternal Jehovah—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a spiritual being "who only hath immortality, dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto, and no man hath seen or can see him." But he is made manifest to the universe, in all the glory of his attributes, by the Son, by whom all things were created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible. And Jesus, the Word of God, made flesh, made in the likeness of man, is delegated to his mediatorial work, for the manifestation of God to this guilty world, for the recovery to himself of an innumerable company of all kindreds, tongues, and nations, and for executing vengeance on all who persist in their rebellion against the government of Jehovah. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man."

* I have made frequent use of Dr. Wardlaw's work on the Socinian controversy; but I cannot help particularly acknowledging my obligation to him for these thoughts respecting delegated authority.

THERE are still several passages of Scripture, descriptive of the dignity of the Saviour, which seem to be altogether inconsistent with his being a mere creature, but which do not fall under any of the heads which we have been considering.—Some of these I shall notice here.

Col. ii. 9—"For in him" (Christ) "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The *Godhead* is the highest possible word to designate the eternal invisible Jehovah. Is it conceivable that all the fulness of the Godhead could be said to dwell in any creature bodily? Our author remarks on this passage, in a note, as follows.

> Col. ii. 9, is a favourite text with the supporters of the doctrine of an incarnate Deity, though affording it no foundation. The candid reader is requested to ask himself what is meant by the abstract term *fulness*, and not to confound it with *essence*, to which it has no reference. The apostle prays for the Ephesians, c. iii. 17, 19, That Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith, and that they may be filled with all the *fulness* of God. "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you."—1 Cor. vi. 19." Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."—1 John iv. 15.*

It would be difficult to find a more perfect example of mistaking sound for sense, a fault which our author lays to our charge, than this criticism. One text says that in Jesus dwells all the fulness of the Godhead or Deity; and our author adduces as parallel to this, the Ephesians being filled with all the fulness of God.—He might as well confound a vessel filled from the fulness of the ocean, or as full as the ocean,

* Page 3, 2d Edit.

and a vessel containing all the fulness of the ocean. In the one case the apostle refers to the capacities of the human soul, and prays that it may be filled full with all holy gifts and graces. In the other he refers to the source from which we have to draw our gifts and graces, Jesus Christ; and tells us, that we can never exhaust his stores, for that in him dwells all the fulness of God:—we have the ocean to go to for supplies, which can never be exhausted. That this is the sense of the apostle when he speaks of Christ's fulness, is manifest from the use that is made of it. For the verse that follows says—"And ye are complete," (literally filled, the word is the same,) "in" (or by) "him." Why? Because the fulness of the Godhead is in him. Again, Col. i. 19—"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." What application is made of this? That there is full and perfect redemption for those who were alienated from God and far off.* To the same effect, John i. 16—"And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." Nothing can be more evident, therefore, than that, when the Scripture speaks of men being filled with the fulness of God, it refers to the necessities or capacities of men being replenished—filled from the fulness of God: and that, when it speaks of the fulness of Christ, it refers to the source from which we are to draw our supplies. And when, in this view, it is said that in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, it is an expression which cannot, without the most flagrant impiety, be used of any creature.

Another passage we have, Heb. i. 1—4, "God who at sundry times, and in divers manners,

* See the following verses.

spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High: being so much better than the angels, as he hath, by inheritance, obtained a more excellent name than they."

Our author's remarks upon this passage are as follow.

"When the author of the epistle to the Hebrews terms our Saviour, 'The brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person,' he uses two familiar illustrations to exalt our ideas of his dignity and excellence. The one is taken from the reflected splendour of a luminous body viz. the Shechinah; the other from the art of stamping impressions on wax or metal. Christ is to God as a *parhelion*, or reflection of the sun is to the sun itself; or as a beam of light to the everlasting fountain of day whence it issues; and as the likeness, on a coin or medal, to the monarch whom it represents. These are illustrations which can be understood and valued, till creed-makers throw over the one the dark cloud of their comments; and tarnish and obscure both the image and superscription of the other with the canker of their metaphysics."*

Our author forgets, that he himself is creed-maker to the whole Unitarian body. He says that the apostle uses two familiar illustrations to exalt our ideas of the dignity and excellence of the Saviour. Is it in the style, or agreeably to the principles of Scripture, for the purpose of

* Page 45, Ed. 2d.

exalting a creature in the estimation of his fellow-creatures, to declare him to be "the brightness of God's glory, the express image of his person?" These are 'lofty hyperbolical epithets,' that would require some better countenance than even the supposed title given to Hezekiah—the Mighty God.

"The one," says he, "is taken from the reflected splendour of a luminous body, viz. the Shechinah." Can he find a single example of such an expression as the brightness of the glory of any luminous object, meaning not its own brightness, but the brightness of a reflexion of it? Or does he conceive that the beautiful manifestation of the attributes of God in the life and acts of the Lord Jesus, to be so inferior to the dazzling appearance of a flame of fire, or a bright cloud, as to be described only as its reflexion? Jesus, at his transfiguration, exhibited the very appearance of the Shechinah; and does our author regard the dazzling brightness which he then assumed, as a superior manifestation of majesty, to the loveliness of his spiritual character? Rather, our Lord is compared to the Shechinah itself, by the brightness of which the Lord impressed those who witnessed it with some conception of his glory, and not the reflexion of it. Jesus was as superior to the Shechinah, as the Gospel is to the Jewish dispensation.

But again, "he is as a beam of light to the everlasting fountain of day from whence it flows."—Can the author find us an example of such an expression as, the brightness of the glory of the sun, signifying only, a single beam from the sun. Even this would be too high a description to give of any creature—that he was a beam from the glory of God. It would be to make him the

same in nature with the Deity, although different in degree of glory. The author, however, seems in this to be nearer the truth. The comparison is not to one beam of the sun, but to the whole power of his beams, the very "brightness of his glory." And Jesus is thus to God, what the beams are to the sun; that by which its glory is manifested, and its light and heat, and vivifying, fructifying, influences are diffused.

The comparison of the image of a monarch on a coin or medal, falls infinitely short of the apostle's terms—'express image of his person,' or substance. These words convey the idea of a perfect exemplar, or delineation of the original. It is more in the sense in which the countenance is the image of the mind. The substance of the Deity is invisible, and incomprehensible. We could no more form any conception of it, than we could of the mind of man, without the aid of his bodily form, features, gestures, &c., which are to us the image of his soul. So the Lord Jesus, being the brightness of the glory of God, is to us the outward visible image or manifestation of his inward invisible nature.

The words of the following clause, "and upholding all things by the word of his power," can, by no ingenuity of criticism, be reduced within such limits, as that they might without idolatry be applied to any creature. He who can read this first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, without being at least shaken in his persuasion, that Jesus is only a creature, I fear would not be convinced "even if one should rise from the dead."

The next passage of Scripture, of the description which we are now considering, to which I shall direct the reader's attention is Philip. ii.

5—8, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

We have already adverted to this passage in two former chapters.* We have seen that, even according to the very lowest sense in which the words can be understood, they necessarily imply that Jesus had an existence and station in heaven, before he appeared on earth, and a nature superior to humanity. We have also seen that our author's objection to God's making himself of no reputation, was founded on a total misapprehension of what these words imply:—not the divesting of the Deity, even for a moment, of any portion of the glory that belongs to him; but merely his manifesting himself to men, in a form in which they held him in no reputation. He was held in no reputation by the Jews, when they rejected him as their king, when they preferred the worship and service of idols, when they neglected the worship of his temple, and permitted it, as in the days of Ahaz and Manasseh, to become waste and filled with rubbish and filth; and he is made of no reputation in the present day, by those who despise his laws, neglect his worship, profane his Sabbaths and his name: so when he presented himself to the world, in the form of the meek and lowly Jesus, the world held him in no reputation, they 'saw no beauty in him that they should desire him,'

* See pages 64 and 101 above.

and 'he was despised and rejected of men.' And, in Jesus Christ, he is still held in no reputation by every man "who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace;"* and therefore, such a one shall be visited with much sorer punishment, than "he that despised Moses' law," and "died without mercy."

Since however our author's critique on this passage, especially in his second edition, is elaborate, it seems necessary to attend to it a little more at length. It is as follows.

"Few texts are quoted more frequently in support of Christ's imagined equality to God than Phil. ii. 6.—"Who being in the form of God" &c.—a verse which, rightly translated, has a meaning totally different from that assigned to it by Trinitarianism. The apostle's object is to inculcate humility and benevolence by the example of Jesus. 'Let nothing,' says he 'be done through strife and vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,' &c.

"*Being in the form of God* no more implies that he was really God, than *being in the form of a slave* implies that he was really a slave. The one phrase is opposed to the other, and each means that Christ was in a certain state of similitude. In his virtues of benevolence and wisdom, and in the power and authority with which he was invested by his heavenly Father, he bore a similitude to the Deity;

* Heb. x. 28, 29.

and, notwithstanding his glorious and godlike perfections, such was his humility that he would not assume even the name of a God, though so much better entitled to that appellation than Moses, and all the other Jewish legislators to whom it was given. He thought of no such act of spoliation and robbery ἁρπαγμον, as, by the assumption of divine honours, to place himself on an equality with Jehovah. But he emptied, or divested himself even of the honours which he might have justly claimed and enjoyed; declaring that he came not to seek his own glory, but the glory of him by whom he was deputed. He humbled himself from the similitude of a God, to the similitude of a slave—and in this condition ministered unto his Disciples, even unto the washing of their feet—nay more, being in the likeness of men, and in condition as a man i. e. "with all the contingencies of human nature,"* for he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. "Wherefore, or for which reason, God also hath highly exalted him," &c.

"This is a most beautiful and affecting lesson on humility, and an admirable illustration of the truth of our Lord's doctrine, that he who humbleth himself shall be exalted. The meaning is perspicuous throughout, and in perfect conformity with the apostle's design. But if we understand the passage in the Trinitarian sense, we shall see that it perverts his meaning, and contradicts his design altogether. Let us see. "Who being in the form of God," i. e. as Trinitarians understand the expression, "being the supreme God," did not think it any act of rapine or robbery to be equal with God. He deemed it a fair legitimate, and unquestionable right, to place himself on a perfect equality with Jehovah, that is, with himself, which is absolute nonsense. But emptied himself of his glory.—Here the disjunctive particle *but* expresses no op-

* Wakefield.

position, though both the meaning and the expression are highly antithetical.* From this mode of interpretation, it would appear that the apostle was exhorting the Philippians, not to be humble, but ambitious!"†

The remainder of the criticism has in part, been already considered; and in part, namely, that which respects Christ's exaltation, will be considered in a future chapter. On what has been transcribed above, the following observations are submitted to the reader.

The plausibility of this criticism depends greatly on the total overlooking of one important step in the descent of the Saviour into the valley of humiliation:—"He was made in the likeness of men." It is obvious, from the bare reading of the text, that the apostle, beginning with a statement of the original glory of the Redeemer, traces regularly downward the successive steps of his humiliation, till his death on the cross.—Now his being made in the likeness of man, is

* Here is given a note, which is too long for insertion. It is an illustration by Wakefield, of the force of the word *but*, regarded as a *disjunctive* particle. One example must suffice—"*The healthy need not a physician.*" By no means; it were useless to affirm it. Who then? The contrary to these.—"BUT the sick." So Jesus Christ did not think his resemblance to God, a thing greedily to be asserted; BUT the contrary to this, he emptied himself of it.

The answer to this critique on αλλα, *(alla,) but*, is that it is both a conjunctive and disjunctive particle, as any lexicon or grammar will inform the reader. It signifies merely *another thing*, and that other thing may be either of the same, or of a different kind from that which was mentioned before. Jesus being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But, or notwithstanding this high dignity, he made himself of no reputation, &c. Surely our author will not pretend that there is any fault, in point of grammatical construction, in such a sentence as this, 'Jesus is God *but* he humbled himself.'

† Page 21, Ed. 2d.

posterior to his emptying or divesting himself of his glory, and taking upon him the form of a servant. Whereas, by our author's interpretation, the apostle is supposed, first to describe his condition as a servant in the world, and afterwards to state that he was made in the likeness of man :—a dislocation of the passage which is totally inadmissible.

Our author had good reason for omitting this statement that Jesus was made in the likeness of man; for it would have rendered nugatory his explanation of the phrase, *being in the form of God.* 'This,' says he, 'no more implies that he was really God, than *his being in the form of a servant* implies that he was really a slave :' he ought in justice to have added, 'or his *being made in the likeness of men*, and being *found in fashion as a man*, implied that he was really a man.' But this he durst not add, because it would have overturned his whole hypothesis; and therefore he prudently omits all notice of Christ's being made in the likeness of men. Nothing however can be more obvious, than that he cannot infer from the phrase, *the form of God*, that Jesus was not really God; without at the same time inferring from the phrases, *likeness of man*, and *fashioned as a man*, that Jesus was not really a man. The expression, *form of God*, is much nearer to the *nature or reality of God*, than *likeness of man* is to the nature or reality of man.

These two points being determined, the author's hypothesis falls to pieces. He must now explain how Jesus was in the form of a servant *before* he was made in the likeness of men : and he must admit, either that Jesus was really God, or that he was not really man. And, when he proceeds to explain the passage on

these simple principles, he will find that his critique must be a second time, (it has already been once) altogether new modelled.

These however are not the only flaws in our author's criticism. The antithetic form of the sentence, as our author conceives of it, is, that Jesus had some resemblance of the Deity, but that he did not arrogate to himself that resemblance; or, as Wakefield expresses it, did not greedily assert his resemblance to God, but divested himself of it. Now, wherein consisted that similitude or resemblance of God? Our author tells us, "In his virtues of benevolence and wisdom, and in the authority with which he was invested by his Father." Did he then divest himself of that benevolence and wisdom, and of that authority with which his Father intrusted him? That will hardly be pretended. But our author again explains, "he emptied or divested himself" (not of any thing with which he was really invested) "but of the honours which he might have justly claimed and enjoyed." That is, he emptied or divested himself of honours which he never enjoyed, or even claimed, but which he *might have* claimed and enjoyed.

And what were these honours which Jesus might justly have claimed and enjoyed? Would the reader believe it? Divine honours. "He thought of no such act of spoliation or robbery," says our author, 'as, by the assumption of Divine honours, to place himself on an equality with Jehovah.' And in all this, let it be remembered, Jesus is held up as a pattern of humility. Although he was more worthy of the appellation *a God* than Moses, yet he did not assert it, or claim Divine honours. Did then Moses assert that title; or is Moses to be regarded as a pattern of humility, because he did

not claim Divine honours? And can any creature be held up as a very model of humility, merely because he is not guilty of the most atrocious act of presumption, assuming Divine honours, and placing himself on a footing of equality with the eternal God?

But the fact is, that Jesus did assert what was understood by those who heard him to be a Divine title, although Moses did not. God, indeed said to Moses, "I have made thee God to Pharaoh;" which is elsewhere explained to mean, "I have put thee in the place of God to Pharaoh, that is to deliver my messages to him." But Jesus said, "if he called them gods to whom the word of God came, how say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest because I said, I am the Son of God." To say that he was *the Son of God* the Jews regarded as arrogating to himself a Divine title.—"We have a law," said they, "and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself *the Son of God.*" It is true they were familiar with the phrases, children of God, sons of God, (as we ourselves are,) and yet they did, (as we also should,) regard it as blasphemy in any mere man to say, "*I am the Son of God.*"

The power of words must be learnt from their application, and not from their etymology. In our own language, for example, to call a man *a lord*, or to speak of *the Lords*, is an every day occurrence; and yet for a man to say, "I am the Lord," would be regarded as the most revolting blasphemy. We can speak of *gods*, in reference to the gods of the heathen; by an intermediate reference to the same imaginary beings, men sometimes say that they were among the gods, (alluding to the higher galleries of a place of public amusement), who would be horror-struck

by hearing any one say "*I am God.*" So although the Jews might not have been offended by our Lord's saying that he was one of the sons or children of God, a form of phraseology to which they were accustomed; yet they could not but be startled when he said, '*I am the Son of God:*' a title which never was assumed by any, even the most renowned of their ancestors.

Our author's explanation of this text therefore is absurd and monstrous in every part of it.

While, of course, I hold our author to be a competent expositor of his own views; I must protest against his being recognized as an expositor of ours. What he calls Trinitarianism, is his own crude, or purposely distorted caricature of the opinions of those who believe in the Divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—He might, to as much purpose, draw from his imagination a picture of Luther or Calvin, and then ridicule them because their heads were too large, or their legs too short. Let it be remembered that the word *God* is an appellative and not a proper name; although, in consequence of there being but one God, it has the force of a proper name. The word *king* is an appellative also, expressive of a certain rank and station in society; yet, in any kingdom, the words *the king* have the power of a proper name, in designating a particular individual. When then the apostle says that Jesus was in the form of God, he informs us that, before he commenced his progress of humiliation, which ended with his death on the cross, he was manifested in the glory and majesty of God. The word *μορφη (form)*, does not properly signify likeness or similitude, but the outward appearance of any thing, as distinguished from its internal nature —that which is manifest of it to others. It is

thus so identified with the thing itself, that the *form* of a thing is sometimes used to denote the inward nature or essence of it; and this very expression, *form of God*, is used by Plato to express the nature or essence of the Deity.* By the Saviour's being *in the form* of God, then, we understand that he was really God, and was manifested as God, that is held, in the face of the universe, the rank, character, and station, of the supreme being—creator and governor of all things. And, being in that condition, he accounted it no robbery to be treated as God, to receive the praise and adoration due to the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, whom he manifested. Or did not esteem it a booty or prey, a thing which he had acquired, for so the phrase sometimes means, but a thing which was his by inherent right, and of which, (although he might, as respected any class of his creatures, lay it aside,) he could never be deprived.†

BUT—or notwithstanding his being in this exalted station, he nevertheless made himself of no reputation, literally, *emptied himself*—divested himself of something that he possessed, not of what he might have possessed, namely, in regard to man, of the outward majesty and splendour of his supreme station as Lord of all, and took on him the form of a servant or minister of the Divine will; undertaking a certain office for the recovery of fallen-man, and the manifestation of the Divine glory. It was in this character that he condescended to manifest himself in human form to Abraham, and in a flame of fire to Moses, and that he stooped to become the

* See Schleusner's lexicon. † This is Chrysostome's explanation of the phrase, who was a native Greek.

civil governor of a particular nation. But this was not all, he was made in the likeness of man, that is, bearing the outward form of man, and submitting to the "contingencies of human nature," he was really a man. He thus, in his manifestation of himself, laid aside even the flaming fire, the thunder and the lightning, with which his appearance on Sinai was accompanied, the pestilences and plagues with which he chastized his people and punished their enemies, and the mysterious darkness in which he dwelt in the Holy of Holies; and appeared as a man among them, one of their kindred, of the house and lineage of David. Nay more, he further humbled himself, he did not appear as a sovereign, a great and powerful prince, but as a private individual under the law, a poor and despised man; and to crown the whole, submitted to death,—that death which the lowest and vilest criminals were made to suffer.

In all this we have a history of the Redeemer in perfect conformity with the rest of Scripture, in perfect consistency with itself, free from those dislocations of the text, and those monstrous and revolting hypotheses, which mark the Unitarian interpretation of it. And the whole together leads us irresistibly up to the supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus. Who could he be, in whom it was a manifestation of humility, to become a servant of God, to do his will? Who could he be, in whom it was humility to be made in the likeness of man, and to subject himself to "all the contingencies of human nature?" Was it not one who might have done otherwise, and if so, must it not have been he, whose alone it is to determine in what form or nature he may choose to manifest himself? Strange expression of humility which Unitarians ascribed to a mere man,

or to a mere creature, that he should become a servant of God, that he should appear in human nature, and that he should not arrogate to himself Divine honours, or place himself on a footing of equality with the Deity!

But we should not do justice to this subject, if we did not observe, that the lesson inculcated by the apostle, is not abstract humility; but that particular exercise of humility by which we are led to pay a kind, affectionate, respectful, attention to the wants of others. It is an argument similar to that which he uses to induce the members of the Corinthian church to abstain from meats offered to idols for the sake of weak brethren, although they might conceive it to be lawful to partake of them, when they paid no respect to the idol. He shows them that he abstained from many rights and privileges which, as an apostle, he was vested with, and might have exercised, lest he should hinder the progress of the Gospel. He became all things to all men that he might gain some.* So here he inculcates upon the Philippians, a kind, considerate, attention to the wants of their brethren, by reminding them what the Lord Jesus submitted to for the purpose of saving perishing sinners. It is the same argument which the beloved apostle uses, when he says, "Hereby perceive we the love of *God*," (rather of Christ,) "because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."†

The last text of the description under consideration which I shall notice is Heb. ii. 16—"For verily he took not on *him the nature of angels*: but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham."

* 1 Cor. ix. † 1 John iii. 16.

The number of words in Italics, in this version, indicate that it is not a just one, which is freely admitted. The Unitarian version renders the text, "For indeed Christ helpeth not angels; but he helpeth the seed of Abraham." In this rendering, at least in substance, I am disposed to acquiesce. It is literally, "for he taketh not hold of angels; but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham." The words rendered, *to take hold of*, however, properly signifies, to take hold of, for the purpose of helping or strengthening.—Acquiescing therefore in the rendering of the Unitarian version, I simply ask the question, who is Jesus that he might take hold of angels to help them, but does not; and who chooses in preference, to take hold of and help the seed of Abraham? Must he not be superior to angels if it were in his power to help them? And if so, I ask again, who is he?

CHAP. IX.

DIVINE WORSHIP PAID TO JESUS.

I proceed now to bring forward certain evidences of a moral nature, that Jesus was none other than the true God, manifest in the flesh; that a prominence is given to him, a worship and reverence claimed for him, utterly inconsistent, on the principles of Scripture itself, with his being a mere creature, however highly exalted. This argument is founded upon a truth which is not only explicitly declared, but which is involved in almost every doctrine of Scripture, and which forms the basis of much that our author and other Unitarian writers advance in opposition to the Divine nature of the Redeemer, namely, that God will not give *his* glory to another, that it is contrary to his will to give any part of that honour to any creature which belongs exclusively to him. This truth being admitted, if we can show that the peculiar honour and reverence that are due to God are given to Christ—that the worship, the faith, the love, the obedience, which are due to God, and to be paid only to God, are demanded for Christ, given to him by the inspired servants of God, and accepted by him, it surely follows that Christ is not different from that God who is the exclusive object of all divine worship and obedience; but is one with him; and that, when our adoration,

our faith, our love, our obedience, and our hope, are directed to Christ, they are directed to God who dwells in him.

I commence with the worship that is demanded for Christ in the Scripture, paid to him by the inspired and approved servants of God, and accepted by him.

This is a part of the subject which is laboured by our author with great care. He devotes ten pages of his publication to it. His statements are too long to be inserted here in full; nor is it necessary that they should, because I shall not feel it necessary to dispute many of them. It appears to me that almost every thing that he has advanced might be admitted, without, in the slightest degree, affecting the general argument.

He commences with an assertion, blazoned in capital letters, that "Divine honours were not paid to Christ;" which, however, he immediately modifies, by adding, in the smaller type, "by any of his cotemporaries upon earth." But the whole proposition, including this addition, is very different from the first part of it, taken by itself; for it might be true that Divine honours were not paid to Jesus on earth, because his rank was unknown, while yet they have been paid to him since he ascended to heaven. Our author then, agreeably to the sense of the two parts of the proposition taken together, proceeds to show, that the honour or worship that were paid to the Lord Jesus while he was on earth, was merely that description of worship which was due to an illustrious prophet, and not to a Divine being. He argues that, if Divine worship were to be paid to Christ, it would be explicitly inculcated, and in terms, about the meaning of

which there could be no dispute. "Another Deity," says he, "besides God, being proposed by revelation as an object of worship, it is inconceivable on any principle of common sense, why it is not enjoined in terms at least equally clear as those which enjoin prayer to God supreme." He pleads that, "this argument derives considerable force from the reflexion, that the Gospel was designed for the poor and the illiterate, as well as for men of education;" and that "no man of plain understanding will ever find that it is his duty to pray to any being but the Father Almighty." He reminds us that "Our Lord was instant in prayer to 'his Father and our Father, to his God and our God.'" He asserts that Christ even forbade that prayers should be made to him saying, '*in that day*,' "viz. in the time of his highest exaltation," '*ye shall ask me nothing*,' and asserts, that Jesus was that angel who would not permit the apostle John to worship him, as mentioned in the book of Revelations. He then notices the case of Stephen, his observations on which I shall transcribe at length before I conclude.—He pleads that the peculiar terms ascriptive of religious homage to Jehovah are not applied to the Son, and specifies *αἰνεω (aineo)* I praise, *λατρευω (latreuo)* I serve, and *σεβομαι (sebomai)* I worship or adore, as never applied to the Lord Jesus. He further pleads that the Jews never charged our Lord with claiming Divine worship, which they surely would have done, if they could have substantiated such an accusation; and that the apostles were never accused of the introduction of any new or strange worship.*

Here our author still insists upon language,

* Page 28, or 2d Edit. page 34

'the meaning of which cannot be disputed;' to which requisition we must still reply, that, after the specimens which we have had of disputing the meaning of language, we may fairly assert that he demands what he himself intentionally renders impossible. Upon the principles of criticism adopted by him, I will undertake to dispute the meaning of any language, on any subject, that he may choose to produce; and none more easily than those passages of Scripture on which he builds his own system. He still reasons as if we set up Jesus as another God besides God the Father, whereas our doctrine is, that God, the Father of the universe, was manifest in him. His assertion that Jesus, on any occasion, forbade worship being paid to him, is altogether groundless. The only instances which he produces are John xvi. 23—"In that day ye shall ask me nothing." In the first place, the words are not a command but a prediction. Secondly, *that day*, does not refer to Christ's highest exaltation, but to his resurrection, or to the descent of the Holy Spirit, which had been spoken of in verse 13th, and which seems to be that which our Lord refers to when he speaks of his seeing them again, 'in a little while:'—And, thirdly, by, "*asking him*," both Whitby and Campbell, our author's favourite commentators, at least among Trinitarians, understand *putting questions to him*, in which sense the same word is twice used in this chapter, (verses 13th and 19th); and the meaning may be, that then they would have no need to put questions to him to solve their doubts, they themselves being fully instructed by the Holy Spirit. The word rendered *ask* in the following clause of the verse—'Whatsoever ye shall *ask* the Father,' is a different word. It is to be observed, however, that our Lord distinguishes between 'asking *him*,'

and asking the Father *in 'his name.'* When he says, ye shall ask me nothing, he immediately adds, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in my name*, he will give it you." And our Lord's meaning may be, that they should make no request to him as separate from the Father, because they should then know to ask the Father as manifest in him. I should be glad to learn from our author, or any other Unitarian, what is meant by asking of God *in the name of Christ;* and how he reconciles such a direction for prayer to reason and common sense, on his own principles.

The strange hypothesis, that the angel who would not permit John to worship him was the Lord Jesus, we have already considered.*—I may, I presume take it for granted, that these are the only passages in the whole Bible in which there is even the appearance of any prohibition to worship the Redeemer; or at least that these are the strongest which the author could produce:—this removes one obstacle out of our way.

But on the general strain of our author's argument respecting the worship of the Redeemer, I offer the following remarks.

1. Even if it could be satisfactorily proved that no divine worship was ever offered to our blessed Lord, either while he was corporeally in the world, or after his ascension to heaven—that no such worship is demanded for *him* as distinguished from the Father and the Holy Spirit, these circumstances would not even tend to prove that he is not one of the persons of the Godhead. The proper object of our ordinary

* See Pages 172 and 173, above.

worship might be God in his unity, consisting of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and not any one of the persons of the Godhead as distinguished from the others. And I believe the truth to be, that the proper object of ordinary worship, both under the Old and under the New Testament dispensations, is the one living God, who fills heaven and earth with his presence, existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, manifested under the Old Testament, in the Shechinah, or glory of the Lord that rested on the mercy seat in the most holy place, and manifested under the New Testament, in Jesus Christ. I do not conceive, however, that this form of worship is so exclusive, as absolutely to preclude divine worship being paid to the Father, or to the Son, or to the Holy Ghost, separately; for I think that there are unequivocal instances of such worship to be found in the word of God: but the general practice of Scripture seems to indicate, that, in ordinary worship, we should address the Deity in his unity, manifested to us as, in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to men their trespasses. I confess that I have ever disliked the use of the word *Trinity* in prayer to God, as not being a name whereby God reveals himself to us, and as savouring of scholastic theology.

Perhaps it may be thought an objection to this view of the subject, that we are directed to address God in prayer as *our Father;* and that, therefore, God the Father, as distinguished from the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is the proper object of worship. But this objection, which our author *seems* at least to press by his constantly speaking of the Father as distinguished from Jesus Christ, when he means the supreme God, is founded on a mere misapplication of the name

Father. When God the Father, as distinguished from the Son, and the Spirit, and as one of the persons of the Godhead, is spoken of, it is not as our Father, but as he, who, within the Deity, bears that name—the Father, in relation to the Son in his Divine nature, and the Spirit. When God is spoken of as *our Father*, we are, I conceive, to understand simply the Deity—the invisible eternal God, without reference to a distinction of persons in the Godhead. It is very singular that some who believe that there are three persons in the Godhead, feel difficulty in conceiving that the title Father should be given to Christ, who is called the Son of God; and some have found difficulty on this ground in believing that Isaiah could ascribe to him the title of the "everlasting Father," or "Father of the everlasting age." But surely there is no inconsistency in a person bearing the relation of son to one, and of father to another. Jesus might stand in the relation of son to God, and in that of father to the whole human race. When therefore we look to God as our Father, we are not to direct our attention to one person of the Godhead—to him who bears the name of Father in reference to the Son and the Spirit; but simply to the one living, eternal, invisible Deity. Our blessed Lord himself may frequently be regarded as using the word Father in the same sense, especially in praying to him. He then spoke as a creature—a man, and was setting us an example of devotion; and there appears to me nothing inconsistent with his divine nature, in his addressing himself, under such circumstances, to the invisible God, whom he manifested to the world, as the Father of the universe, and especially as his God and Father.

2. When the Lord Jesus was on earth in human nature, his claiming and receiving the ordinary worship paid to the Deity, having incense and sacrifices offered to him, would have been altogether unsuitable to his condition, and inconsistent with the nature of that new dispensation which he purposed to introduce. Jesus had then, as regarded men, divested himself of his glory; he had descended from his throne to the condition of a servant or subject, and, instead of holding the ostensible station of legislator, and administrator of the law, had placed himself under the law, and exposed himself to the penalties incurred by the sinful family with whom he had identified himself. To demand, under such circumstances, that the ordinary worship of the Deity, the homage, the royal honours with which his people greeted his presence, and acknowledged his authority, should be paid to him, would have been as incongruous, as it would be in a monarch, who chose to visit any city in his dominions in the character of a private person, to demand the public salutations by which the royal official presence is recognized and announced. Besides, Jesus came to change the form in which the Deity had, till then, been worshipped. The Jews had worshipped him, as peculiarly present in their temple; towards that holy place they always turned when they addressed him in prayer or praise; and it was before the sanctuary that the sacrifices were offered, and the incense burnt. Jesus purposed to draw off their attention from any particular spot on earth, as the place which the Lord chose should be peculiarly regarded as his dwelling-place, and to direct their thoughts to heaven. "The hour cometh," said he to the woman of Samaria, "when ye shall, neither in this mountain, nor

yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." And he taught his disciples to say, "Our Father which art in heaven." His object therefore was to lift their thoughts above this world, to that invisible world into which they were soon to be removed; and it would have been destructive of his own purpose, in drawing off their attention from the temple, merely to fix it upon his own local presence among them.

When, however, he was about to leave the world, he directed them to offer up their petitions to the Father, that is, to the invisible God, in his name; adding, that hitherto they had asked nothing in his name. In this, and in his direction to come to the Father *through* or *by* him, he instructs us to worship in a manner perfectly analogous to the manner in which the Jews worshipped Jehovah their God. They offered their worship to that God, who, under the outward manifestation of a flame of fire, or a cloud of glory, had been the God of their fathers; who had taken up his visible residence in their tabernacle, and afterwards in their temple; and who, although his presence was not, since the Babylonish captivity, manifested by any outward symbol, still assured them that, when they worshipped towards that temple where he had placed his name, he would meet with them and bless them. They therefore worshipped towards the temple at Jerusalem, as the only way of access that they had to the God who fills heaven and earth with his presence. But Jesus, for Jerusalem, substituted heaven; and for the temple, he substituted himself: he combining in his own person all that was represented by the sacrifices, the priests, the incense, the golden candlestick, the table of shew-bread, the ark of the covenant, the tables

of the law, the rod of Aaron, the pot of manna, and the cloud of glory or Shechinah, that dwelt in the midst of these symbols. And now, that he has ascended to heaven, he calls upon all who would draw near to God, to look to him as that temple in which the Deity dwells and is manifested. When an Israelite was at a distance from his native land, he was directed, in addressing his prayer to God, to turn his face towards Jerusalem; and so we, strangers and pilgrims in a foreign land, are directed to look to Jerusalem above, where Jesus is, the true temple of God, 'the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.' "No man," said he, "cometh to the Father but by me;" and therefore, that we may approach the invisible God with an acceptable worship, we must look towards Christ, and to God as manifest in him. I still feel anxious to know what Unitarians precisely understand by praying in the *the name of Christ*, by giving glory to God *through Christ;* especially as they actually make use of these forms of speech in prayer; and therefore cannot say that all they understand by them is, that they are to pray according to Christ's instructions.

3. We have already identified the Lord Jesus with that great Being who, under the Old Testament dispensation, was worshipped under the title GOD and the name JEHOVAH; by proving that these very designations are given to him in Scripture; that passages of the Old Testament which referred to the God of Israel, are applied, in the New Testament, to the Lord Jesus; that the same attributes, and the same works are ascribed to him; from which it manifestly follows that praise, and service, and adoration—worship, in the highest, and most sacred sense of that

word, were paid to him. I do not conceive, however, that that worship was paid to the Son as distinguished from the Father and the Spirit; but that it was paid to the one living God, the Father of the universe, revealed by a plural title, and manifested by the Son, in the visible glory of the tabernacle or temple. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

In the further observations, therefore, that I have to make respecting the divine worship of the Redeemer, as sanctioned by the Scriptures, I would not be understood as attempting to prove, that the Son, as distinguished from the Father and the Holy Spirit, is the proper object of our ordinary worship, except in this view that, as the mediator between God and man, he is the only means of access that we have to the invisible, omnipresent God: but merely that such acts of worship are recorded as addressed to him, sanctioned and demanded on his behalf, as could not be paid to him, if he be a mere creature, without idolatry; and which, therefore, strengthen our argument that he was and is more than a creature, even the true God manifested in our nature. Let me suppose that any one should undertake to prove, that the great being who was manifested to Moses in the burning bush, and to the Israelites in the tabernacle, was the same God who is described as filling heaven and earth with his presence, he would be under the necessity of producing precisely such passages from the Old Testament Scriptures, as those which we produce from the New Testament, to identify the Lord Jesus with the God of Israel; and would be exposed, in every step of his progress, to the same species

of criticism, the same counterbalancing texts, the same alleged ambiguity of language, and the same supposed dictates of reason and common sense, as are employed against us. All those magnificent descriptions of the attributes of the Deity, scattered throughout the Old Testament, would be of no avail to a person engaged in such an argument. He must produce texts, in which these attributes are specifically, and particularly connected with the manifested presence of God in the Shechinah; and these he might find not to be very numerous. And when he had produced his texts, he would be charged, as we are, with resting his opinion on mutilated passages of doubtful interpretation; and descriptions of him who was peculiarly the God and King of Israel, who visibly dwelt among that people, would be demanded as sublime and as expressive, as the descriptions which can be produced of the "King eternal, immortal, and invisible," the God of the universe. Yet, if he could find texts, which doubtless he could, sufficient to identify the God of Israel with the God of the universe, if he could show that he is revealed under the same names and appellations, that the same attributes and the same works are ascribed to him, and that a worship is paid to him, which could not, without idolatry, be paid to any but the supreme God, he ought surely to be regarded as having established his position, that the God manifested in the Shechinah, and the God that fills heaven and earth are the same God. And this is all that can reasonably be required of us, in proving the Divine nature of the Saviour,—not a repetition of all that is said of God in the Scripture, specifically applied to him, but merely texts sufficient to identify him with the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.—

It is with this view then, that, in addition to what has already been advanced, I proceed to show that a worship, which would be branded by the Scripture as idolatrous, if paid to a creature, is, by the sanction of that Scripture, paid to the Redeemer.

To establish this point, it is necessary to fix upon certain acts of worship that the Scripture brands as idolatrous; and to show, that these very acts of worship are paid to the Redeemer. I shall confine my observations to two practices or descriptions of idolatry.

I. The first of those descriptions of idolatry, to which I have intimated my purpose of calling the reader's attention, is the worship of absent persons or inanimate objects. Any act of respect, or reverence, or worship, paid to an inanimate object, or to an imaginary person, or to one who, although he had a real existence, is now deceased, and gone into the world of spirits, is, by the principles and declarations of the word of God, held to be idolatrous. It matters not what the outward mark of respect or reverence may be—whether bowing the knee, or kissing the hand, or preferring petitions, or any other token of reverence; it is sufficient to constitute idolatry, that any such acts are addressed to an insensible object, or to an imaginary or absent person, especially a person so totally absent as to be in the separate state of the dead. Thus kissing the hand to the sun or the moon is by Job declared to be idolatry, and a virtual denial of God that is above.* Bowing the knee to an inanimate or imaginary being is branded as idolatry, 1 Kings xix. 18, and

* Job xxxi. 26—28.

elsewhere. Several acts of idolatry are specified by the prophet Ezekiel, in the eighth chapter of his prophecies. Thus, v. 11, burning incense is so stigmatized; v. 14, weeping for Tammuz, which was an annual commemoration of an imaginary or deceased person; and v. 16, prostration, or doing obeisance to the sun, are placed upon the same footing. In Jer. vii. 18. we read, "The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods," and all of these are regarded as equally engaged in idolatry.

Now it would be downright trifling, to attempt to justify any of these practices, by showing that they might not be intended as acts of divine worship properly so called, and to attempt to distinguish between worshipping and praising, adoring, or serving, or any other words by which reverence or respect are expressed. It is thus that the Church of Rome endeavours to justify her worship of saints and angels. She does not, she says, pay to saints or angels *latria*—that worship that is properly due to God; but only *dulia*—an inferior description of worship. But this distinction is utterly futile, so long as she pays any description of obeisance or reverence to persons who have passed into the world of spirits. Our author, however, in this matter, very closely follows the example of "the infallible church," by attaching much importance to a similar distinction. He cannot find the *latria*, or the *ainesis*, or the *sebasis*, but only the *dulia* and the *proskunēsis* paid to Jesus. But the condemnation of idolatry in the sacred Scriptures is not, by any means, confined to these words. It is just as idolatrous to offer

obeisance, under the form of bowing the knee or kissing the hand, to an absent or insensible object, calling upon it, making cakes in honour of it, as praising it, or burning incense to it, or offering sacrifice to it.

It would also be trifling with the subject, to attempt to distinguish between a worship paid to objects which are known to be inanimate, such as the heavenly bodies, and the worship paid to imaginary persons, or to real persons, but who have passed from this world into the world of spirits. Many of the gods of the heathen were deified men and women. Such tokens of reverence offered to Enoch after his translation, or to Moses after his death, would manifestly have been as idolatrous, as if they had been offered to imaginary beings, or to the host of heaven.

And the ground of this Scripture principle is sufficiently obvious. To address such expressions of respect and reverence to inanimate objects, or absent persons, is in effect to ascribe to them the attributes of Deity. To bow down to an absent, especially a deceased person, or to his image, to kiss the hand to him, to make petitions to him, is to suppose him present, capable of witnessing the worshipper, and of knowing the import of his address. When the Church of Rome directs prayers to be addressed to the Virgin Mary, or to any saint or angel, in all parts of the world, on the same day, she manifestly ascribes to the Virgin Mary, or to that saint or angel, the attributes of omnipresence and omniscience.

Now if we find a warrant in Scripture for any token of reverence or respect being addressed to the Lord Jesus, since he has passed into the world of spirits, if we find that he is called

upon, petitions offered to him, his praises celebrated, his works commemorated in acts of religious worship, surely it will follow, that he is not treated as a creature, but as a divine person, possessing the attributes of ubiquity and omniscience.

Of acts of worship addressed to the Saviour, falling under this head, I notice the following:

1. In a great number of passages, the saints are described as persons who *call upon Christ*, or *upon the name of Christ.* This is an expression that is frequently used, in the Old Testament, to express the worship of Jehovah. Thus, Gen. iv. 26—"Then began men to call upon the name of the LORD" (Jehovah): xii. 8—"And there he" (Abraham) "builded an altar unto the LORD Jehovah, and called upon the name of the LORD" (Jehovah): xiii. 4—"And there Abram called on the name of the LORD" (Jehovah). And so in the New Testament,—Rom. x. 12, 13—"For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him; for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts ii. 21—"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Who is meant by *the Lord* in these passages? I have no doubt that it is the Lord Jesus Christ; but, as this may be disputed, let us suppose that it is Jehovah, the invisible God; it will then follow that this expression, *calling upon*, is used in the New, as well as the Old Testament, to express the addressing of prayer to God.

We now turn to Acts ix. 10—21—"And to him," (Ananias) "said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, behold I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, arise, and go into

the street which is called straight, and inquire for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that *call on thy name.* But the Lord said unto him, go thy way.—And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, brother Saul, the Lord hath sent me—Jesus, who appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.—Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus; and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, is not this he that destroyed them which *called on this name* in Jerusalem?" In this passage it is obvious that by *the Lord* so frequently mentioned is meant Jesus, and that "the saints" are repeatedly described as persons who *called upon the name* of that Lord. Again, 1 Cor. i. 2. "Paul—unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that, in every place, *call upon the name of Jesus Christ* our Lord, both theirs and ours."

To break the force of such passages as these, the editors of the Unitarian version render these two latter passages, *called by the name,* or *call themselves after the name of Jesus.* Why then do they not render the former passages, Rom. x. 10—13. and Acts ix. 21, in the same manner? The form of words is precisely the same, yet these translators render them, *call upon the name of the Lord.* The only reason that can be given

for this difference is, that, in the former passages, the Lord Jesus is not expressly mentioned, so that they conceive that by the word *Lord* they may insist on Almighty God being understood; whereas, in the latter passages, they are compelled to see that Jesus is meant, and therefore, to evade the obvious conclusion, they adopt a mis-translation. I say a mis-translation, for the form of words is that which is uniformly employed, both in the New Testament, and in the LXX. Old Testament, to express *calling upon*; and that too in passages where the sense of, *calling by the name of*, cannot possibly be intended. The construction employed in these instances is incapable of bearing the sense which the Unitarian translators affix to it; nor have they produced a single example to that effect; but content themselves with adducing the opinion of one of the least scrupulous of their own party.* Besides, nothing could be farther from the intention of

* When ἐπικαλεω (*epikaleo*) signifies *to invoke or address in prayer*, it is construed with an accusative—Thus, ὁς ἀν ἐπικαλεσηται το ὀνομα, &c. *who shall invoke the name*, Acts ii. 21. When it signifies, *to give a name to*, it is construed with the same case after as before it. Thus, ὁς ἐπικληθη ἰουστος, *who was called Justus*, Acts i. 23., and τον ἐπικαλουμενον ισκαριωτην, *who was called Iscariot*, Luke xxii. 3. And when it signifies *to call by the name of*, it is construed with the preposition ἐπι, or with a dative. Thus, ἐφ ὁυς ἐπικεκληται το ὀνομα μου ἐπ ἀυτους *upon whom my name is called*, i. e. *who are called by my name*, Acts xv. 17., or παντες ὁσοι ἐπικεκληνται τῳ ὀνοματι μου. *All, as many as are called by my name*, Isa. xliii. 7. Sep. The forms of expression are as distinct as the English forms, *Call* UPON *the name of*, and *Call* BY *the name of*; and before persons pretending to the sacred and most important office of translators of the word of God, take upon themselves to confound these forms, they ought to produce examples of that confusion; and also to show, that they have rightly acted upon the ambiguity, if any such exist, in the specific passages where it occurs.

the apostle than to designate as saints, or to pour forth his blessings indiscriminately on all who might *call themselves by the name of Christ;* but only those who called *upon the name of the Lord* in sincerity and truth.

But we are under no necessity of disputing about the meaning of particular expressions. Let us attend to facts, and we shall find that Jesus actually has been called upon, since he left the world. Thus, 1 Thess. iii. 11—13—"Now God himself and our Father, and our *Lord Jesus Christ* direct our way to you, and *the Lord* make you to increase and abound in love," &c. Here is a prayer to the Father and the Son in the same sentence. Again, 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17., "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." Here again the Lord Jesus is associated in the same prayer with the Father. Again, 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9—"For this thing I besought *the Lord* thrice, that it might depart from me. And *he* said unto me, *my* grace is sufficient for thee; for *my* strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power *of Christ* may rest upon me." What *Lord* was it to whom the apostle addressed himself in his distress? Common sense and reason would say, that *Lord* who said to him, "*My* strength is made perfect in weakness," and whose power the apostle expected to rest upon him; and that *Lord* was Christ. If our author imagine that any other Lord is here meant, nothing surely, but the despised authority of an "infallible church," could determine that point for him.

The forms of benediction used by the apostles are examples of the same description of divine worship. Eph. vi. 23—"Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. xiii. 14—"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." Could a Unitarian make use of this prayer? Or this, 2 John 3—"Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, in truth and love?"

But there is one signal instance of an eminent and inspired servant of Christ, calling upon him, on which our author animadverts. It is that of Stephen, as recorded in Acts vii. 54—60—"When they" (that is, the council, see ch. vi. 12—15.) "heard these things," (the things which Stephen had said) "they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the *glory of God*, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him."—"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*," (rather upon Jesus) "and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep."

Stephen here seems to have seen at once the ancient manifestation of God, called the 'glory of God,' and the New Testament manifestation of

him, namely, in the man Christ Jesus; and Jesus standing on the right hand—in the place of activity, as the agent of the Divine will. It was thus that God seems to have manifested himself also to the apostle Paul, on the way to Damascus. The glory of the Lord, or the Shechinah, shone round about him, at the same time that the Lord Jesus called to him. The same manifestations were given at the transfiguration of the Redeemer, when the bright cloud of the Shechinah, or Divine glory, overshadowed him and the apostles, and at the same time he himself assumed the same dazzling appearance, and Moses and Elias, the two most eminent servants under the law, addressed themselves to him, speaking to him in his glory face to face. So here Stephen, with a view of the *glory of God* before him, addressed his prayer to the Lord Jesus, as that manifestation of God to which it was his privilege to approach.

Our author's comment on this narrative is as follows:

"Great stress has been laid on the invocation of Stephen in his last moments, as if it were an infallible rule to which we were commanded to conform. But to what does it amount? The ideas which Stephen had formed of our Lord, were not such as would justify an act of adoration, as appears from the account which he himself gives of his vision.—'Behold I see the heavens opened, and the *Son of man standing at* the right hand of God.' And they stoned Stephen, calling upon (God is not in the original) and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Nothing could be more natural than such an invocation to the Saviour whom he saw, or had just seen. But what example can it be to us, unless we should be placed in similar circumstances, and gratified with a similar vision? Christ, not

Stephen, is the example for us to follow, and Christ always prayed to the Father.

"The conduct of Stephen has furnished the Socinians with an argument for praying to Christ. Hence, of course, the Unitarian disclaims the appellation of Socinian."*

This case of Stephen is so decided a sanction to the worship of the Redeemer, that, as our author informs us, even the older Socinians, notwithstanding their anxiety to reduce the Saviour, in all respects, to the condition of a mere man, could not bring it within their system; but felt themselves under the necessity of admitting the propriety of worshipping the Saviour as a God, while they believed him to be only a man. Modern Unitarians, however, are not so scrupulous. Pleas have been invented, or rather have been raised to importance, since the days of Socinus, to which he and his followers could pay no attention. The whole matter is now got over in the most easy manner possible; and Stephen's conduct is represented as perfectly natural, even on the hypothesis that he believed the Redeemer to be a mere man. Let us examine these pleas. I would however commence with observing that no one infers, from Stephen's invocation of Jesus, who had been the Lord *from* heaven, and who now was the Lord *in* heaven, that he is the ordinary object of worship, as distinguished from the Father. All that is inferred from it is, that if Christ were a mere creature, such an address could not have been made to him under any circumstances, without incurring the guilt of idolatry. Our author observes that this can be no example to us, unless we were placed in similar circumstances, that

* Page 53, Ed. 2d.

Christ, not Stephen, is our example, and that Christ always prayed to the Father. Granting all this, still Stephen's conduct is an example to us, if we were placed in similar circumstances; and Stephen's conduct was a prayer of a most solemn nature addressed to the Lord Jesus. When our author says that Christ is our example in prayer, it is singular that he does not stop to consider whether we be in the same circumstances with him. Jesus, a pure and holy being, unstained by sin, prayed to the Father doubtless, prayed in his own name, and that too in a strain that no sinful man would dare to imitate. "Father," said he on one occasion, "*I will* that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me."* And on another occasion he said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me: and I knew that thou hearest me always; but, *because of the people that stand by I said it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."† But Jesus taught us to pray differently from him, because our circumstances are different from his. He taught us to pray, "forgive us our trespasses," a petition which the Saviour never offered. He taught us to pray, not in our own name, but in his. And here Stephen, a poor, helpless, dying sinner, follows his directions, and calls upon Christ, that is, upon God in Christ Jesus, in the hour of his extremity.

And what were those circumstances in which Stephen was placed, that are supposed to justify such a prayer to him. "He saw," it is said, "or had just seen the Lord Jesus." The vision was in the council chamber. When

* John xvii. 24. † John xi. 41, 42.

Stephen announced it, the assembly ran upon him, and dragged him, not only out of the council chamber, but out of the city; and there is no intimation of the vision having followed him; so that when he prayed to Christ, he, in all probability, did not see him. Our author adds a saving clause, 'or had just seen him;' but this makes the matter no better. If the heaven was now closed, and Stephen, when he was dragged out of the city, saw nothing but the usual face of the sky, his having previously seen a vision, could form no reason for addressing a being in another world, who was not then visible to him.

Even admitting that the vision followed Stephen to the place of his martyrdom, (which is most improbable) still what was presented to him in vision? Jesus Christ, not on earth, but in heaven, not as a fellow-creature, standing beside him, to whom he could address a common request, but in a situation in which he could be addressed only in prayer, as an omniscient omnipresent being. And accordingly what were the petitions that Stephen preferred to him?—"Lord Jesus receive my spirit—Lord lay not this sin to their charge." These are the same petitions, nearly in the same language, which Jesus addressed to his Father, at the time of his crucifixion. "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." And is it possible to conceive that Stephen should address petitions to a fellow-creature, which Jesus addressed to the most high God? Was this following the example of Christ? Suppose that Jesus, being a fellow mortal, had been standing by him on earth, could he have turned away from God, the hearer of prayer, after having just seen *his glory*,

to say to that fellow creature, "Lord receive my spirit—Lord lay not this sin to their charge?" Could a creature receive the spirit of a dying man; or could a creature have blotted out the sin of his murderers? The supposition is too shocking to be entertained for a single moment.

It is obvious, therefore, that we have approved examples in Scripture, of calling upon, or praying to Christ, since his ascension to heaven.—And if we would have the folly of such prayers on the supposition that Jesus is only a creature, vividly exposed, we have but to turn to the address of Elijah to the prophets of Baal, when they were calling upon the name of their God, 1 Kings xviii. 21—29. "They called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon saying, O Baal hear us." "And it came to pass at noon that Elijah mocked them, and said, cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey; or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." I ask any candid man whether these sarcasms be not strictly applicable to any one who calls upon the name of Christ, if he be not omnipresent and omniscient? Yet inspired apostles called upon him, and urged others to do so. Stephen called upon him, as the Lord in heaven, and Christians generally were distinguished by the inspired penmen, as persons who called on the name of the Lord Jesus. Let any one, conversant with the principles of Scripture, imagine what would be implied in the early Christians having addressed such prayers as were addressed to Jesus in heaven, to Peter, or Paul, or any of the apostles after their decease; or what would be implied in Christians being described as persons who call upon the names of Peter or Paul; and he will at once feel how irreconcileable to Scripture

principles it is, that Jesus, if he were but a creature, should be addressed in any form, after his ascension to heaven.

2. Another description of worship, which falls under the general head, of doing obeisance or reverence to a person who has passed into the world of spirits, is commemorating such persons by religious observances. There is no instance in the whole Bible of an ordinance established in commemoration of any individual or the acts of any individual, but the acts of God only.—There is no such thing as a commemoration of Moses, or of any of his acts; or of David, or of Solomon, or of Peter, or of Paul, or of any of the servants of God. The chief commemorative acts under the law, were the Sabbath, in memory of God's having created the world; and the Passover, in memory of his having delivered the Israelites from the oppression of the Egyptians.

Now there are two commemorations of Jesus under the Gospel, parallel to these two great commemorations under the law.

The first of these is the assembling of Christians on the first day of the week, and calling it the Lord's day; both of which things are done in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. This is declared to have been an act of Christ himself. "Destroy this temple," said he, "and in three days *I* will raise it up." It is true that it is said also to be the work of God, and of the Spirit of God; but that only proves how perfectly synonymous it is, in the language of Scripture, to say that any act was done by God, or to say that it was done by Christ. The Sabbath, I have said, was instituted in commemoration of the creation of the

world in six days. It has been so far altered, under the Christian dispensation, by the example of the apostles, as at least to add to the commemoration of the creation a commemoration of the Redeemer. Nay, the change of the day of commemoration from the last, to the first day of the week, seems to intimate, that the event which we are now to regard as chiefly commemorated in the Christian Sabbath, is, not the creation of the world, but Christ's rising from the dead. Is it possible to conceive of a higher homage being paid to the Redeemer, than, that a commemoration, which had been observed for about four thousand years in honour of God, should have been changed in honour of Jesus; or to imagine a more perfect blending of the worship paid to him, with that which is paid to God? We are not thus taught to forget God on the Sabbath, that we may remember Christ; but we are taught to remember God in Christ, as the Saviour of sinners, rather than God, as the Creator of the world.

Another act of commemoration, inculcated upon Christians is, the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This ordinance was instituted by Jesus himself, in memorial of his sufferings and death,—in memorial of himself specifically. "This do," said he, "in remembrance of me." This ordinance takes the place, in the Christian Church, of the Passover in the Jewish, which was a commemoration of the interposition of God, for the deliverance of his people from the bondage of Egypt. If Christ be a mere creature, and insensible to any act of respect paid to him, having been removed beyond the sphere of witnessing such acts, this ordinance would be as absurd as the weeping of the women for Tammuz.

I have heard this ordinance explained, as an institution similar to the common practice, of commemorating illustrious individuals, after their departure from the scenes of their achievements. But this is again to measure the book of God by the absurd and idolatrous practices of the world. I hold that all such commemorations of persons who are insensible to them, have a tendency to idolatry; and that a large proportion of the idolatry of the Pagan and corrupted Christian world, originated in such practices.—Men commemorated, and heaped expressions of respect upon deceased persons, till they persuaded themselves that their expressions of respect reached them in their separate state, and afforded them satisfaction. I believe that they would produce the same effects, still if they were not confronted with the light of Christian revelation; and that, notwithstanding that light, they may yet introduce some species of paganism into these islands. Some of these commemorations, particularly that of Shakespeare at Avon, have already approximated very near indeed to pagan worship. I hold that, when such commemorations are accompanied with religious worship, they are always acts of idolatry; not only without countenance in the word of God, but directly opposed to it. It is pleaded that the worship offered in such commemorations is not offered to the deceased person who is commemorated, but to God. But I should really be at some loss to determine, whether it were more profane and idolatrous to offer some sort of worship to a deceased human creature, or to engage in the worship of God, not directly in honour of God himself, but in honour of one of his creatures; so that, at the very moment when the worshipper is apparently addressing his worship to God, his thoughts are called off in another direction, to

the creature in honour of whom that very worship of God is performed. For my part I should conceive the latter description of idolatry to be the worst of the two.

But the commemoration of Christ in the Lord's Supper is an act of most solemn religious worship. It has in it, not indeed a sacrifice, but the representation of a sacrifice. It comes in the place of one of the most prominent religious observances of the Old Testament Church; and whether the worship be regarded as paid to God, or to Christ Jesus, still, the observance of the ordinance being a commemoration of Jesus, it is most palpable idolatry in those who believe him to be a mere creature, altogether different from that God to whom worship is offered in it, and insensible of the respect and reverence that is paid to his memory. And the only principle on which the ordinance can be reconciled to the Scripture laws respecting Divine worship, is, that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, and that the religious worship implied in it, is offered to God in Christ.

II. Another description of idolatry, (according to the principles of Scripture,) is to do obeisance to any creature, whether rational or irrational, whether present or absent, as ascribing to that creature any work of God. Here again, it matters not what the outward expression of obeisance or worship may be, or by what name it may be called; it is sufficient to constitute it idolatry, that it ascribes to a creature the glory of what was done by the Creator.—When, for example, Satan tempted our blessed Lord to do him obeisance for all the kingdoms of the world, he did not make use of any of those particular words to which our author attaches so much importance. He used the com-

mon term for worship or obeisance (*proskunesis*). But, when Jesus answered him, he said—"It is written thou shalt worship (*proskuneseis*) the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou *serve (latreuseis)*"*—thus using the word *latria*, or religious service; and thereby intimating, that any act of obeisance or worship would, under such circumstances, (being an acknowledgment of power in Satan over the kingdoms of the world) be equivalent to religious service, and consequently would be idolatry. Suppose, for example, that the Israelites, after passing through the Red Sea, had immediately fallen down before Moses, had given him thanks, had done him obeisance or worship for their deliverance, and had called him their Saviour, would they not have been guilty of idolatry? And if Moses had received such obeisance, would he not have been guilty of accepting an honour which was due to God only? What would it have availed that he and they should have attempted to excuse themselves by saying, that the worship which they offered, and which he accepted, was not properly religious worship; that it was by no means meant as *latria*, or *sebasis*, or *ainesis;* that it was only *proskunesis* or *dulia?* Would the plea have been admitted? Certainly not.—They would have been held guilty of idolatry, in ascribing to him a deliverance which God himself had achieved for them; and he of profane arrogance, in accepting a worship which was due only to God.

Now I ask, wherein would have been the difference, in point of principle, between the Israelites thus doing obeisance to Moses as their deliverer from Pharaoh and from the waves of the sea, and the following instances of obeisance

* Luke iv. 8.

paid to the Lord Jesus. Mat. xiv. 22—25, 32, 33—"And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him to the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with the waves, for the wind was contrary. And, in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them walking on the sea.—And when they," (Jesus and Peter,) "were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, of a truth, thou art the Son of God."—Again, Luke v. 4. 11.—After Jesus had directed Peter to cast forth his net, and Peter, with his companions, had obtained an astonishing draught of fishes, Peter "fell down at Jesus' knees saying, Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Is it possible to conceive of a more decisive recognition of Jesus as the author of the miracle, or of a deeper expression of self-abasement under a sense of the immediate presence of God? Job, under a similar impression, said, "I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes."* And Isaiah, when he saw the glory of Jehovah, said—"Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of Hosts." And here Peter, upon his knees, says, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Yet Jesus did not check Peter's humble expression of reverence in recognizing him as the author of the miracle; but said to him, "Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men." A similar instance oc-

* Job xlii. 5, 6.

curs in the conduct of the man who received his sight from Jesus. When he was cast out of the Synagogue, in consequence of the testimony which he bore to Jesus, and when Jesus found him, he said to him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" He answered and said, "who is he Lord, that I might believe on him?" And Jesus said unto him, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." And he said, "Lord I believe, and he worshipped him." It is of little consequence to determine what view the man had of the sense in which Jesus called himself the Son of God, he manifestly worshipped him, as the person who had delivered him from that deep darkness in which he had spent the whole previous part of his life; and Jesus received the honour of that great work, without saying one word of God, as of another Being, to whom, according to the Unitarian doctrine, the whole honour was due. In like manner Stephen recognized Jesus by his worship and his prayer to him, as one who could receive his departing spirit. In perfect accordance with these examples is our Lord's declaration—"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." Why? "Because the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Here it is declared that Jesus is to be honoured even as the Father is honoured, on this ground, that he is the judge of the world. It is true that he is the judge of the world by the appointment of the Father; but there is no instance in the whole Bible, of any direction to honour any servant as the Father is honoured, on account of any work that might have been intrusted to him to accomplish. Such language applied to any prophet or apostle would be an inculcation of idolatry; and

can be justified, as applied to Jesus, only on the principle, that Jesus, although a servant, was not a mere servant, but had an inherent right to the glory of all the works done by him.

The style in which our Lord constantly wrought his miracles would have been, I conceive, utterly inconsistent with his duty to God, had he been a mere creature or servant. He permitted people to come to him, to follow him, to call upon him; as if the power of working miracles, or of refusing to work, rested entirely with himself. Can any one who is acquainted with the principles of Scripture, imagine that Peter or Paul would have permitted, in connection with their working miracles, such a scene as the following, Mat. xv. 21—28., "Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts and *cried* unto him, saying, *Have mercy* on me, *O Lord*, thou Son of David, my daughter is greviously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her way, for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and *worshipped him*, saying, *Lord help me.* — But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.— And she said, truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Here is earnest prayer on the part of the woman, a temporary refusal to hear her on the part of Jesus, for the purpose of drawing forth the expression of her faith in his greatness

and his power, and the miracle at length wrought without one syllable having been said, either on the part of the woman or of Jesus, respecting the great God who alone could grant her petition, and who, having granted it, was alone entitled to thanks and praise on account of it. How different all this was from the conduct of Joseph or Moses before Pharaoh, or Daniel before Nebuchadnezzar! Could any of the prophets or apostles have acted as in the following instance? Matt. ix. 27—30. "And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, thou Son of David have mercy on us. And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus saith unto them, believe ye that *I am able* to do this? They said unto him, yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, according to your faith be it unto you." What faith? That Jesus was able to do it. "And their eyes were opened."

When Moses, or any of the ancient prophets wrought miracles, they wrought them in the name of the Lord. They took the utmost care to let it be distinctly known that the power did not reside in them; but that it was in God, and came directly from God, and that they merely announced the purpose of God to work the miracle. Our author says, "As to the mere exertion of physical power, so far as its display may seem calculated to produce a belief of high supernatural agency, our Lord did not stand alone among the prophets of God." I answer, that he did stand alone in the personal exercise of that power. He is as distinct from them in the manner in which he exercised his power, as God himself was distinct from them. Jesus wrought his miracles in his own name; and he intimated that he was able to work them. On

one occasion he prayed when he was about to work a miracle, but he said that it was only for the sake of those that stood by. Our author says, "That Moses cleft the billows of the Red Sea, and led the Israelites in triumph through the heart of the deep, before the pursuing host of Pharaoh." He would do well to look at that history more attentively. It was not Moses, but God, who, by an east wind, dried up the Red Sea. It was not Moses, but God, who, by a pillar of cloud and of fire, led the Israelites through the heart of the sea. Moses indeed stretched out his rod, when the sea was to be divided, and when it was to flow into its bed for the destruction of Pharaoh; but it was by the immediate command of God: and it was God, not Moses, who received the homage and the honour due to that stupendous work. He says, if Christ raised the dead, so did Elisha, and so did Paul. But Elisha prayed to the Lord, and so did Peter when he raised Tabitha; and thus removed all ambiguity as to the source whence the power came. With regard to Paul's raising Eutychus, he merely declared, when he embraced him, that his life was in him; from which, it would seem, that he was only apparently dead. Our author says, further, that Joshua said, in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon." But he omits to say that Joshua previously spoke or prayed to the Lord on that day, who authorized or directed him to give that command; and that it is afterwards said, that "there was no day before it, or after it, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man."* We are thus unequivocally told, and Israel was told at the time, that it was the Lord, and not Joshua, who wrought

* Jos. x. 12—14

the miracle. But Jesus frequently wrought miracles without any such open acknowledgment of God. He frequently commanded, in his own name, and left the spectators to infer that the power resided in himself, that he himself was able to do these works, and that it was entirely at his own option to interpose or to withhold his miraculous power. Moses, in one instance, spoke as if the power had resided in him, and had been at his own disposal. When he was directed to smite the rock that it might give forth water to the people, instead of glorifying the Lord, he said, "Hear, now, ye rebels, must *we* fetch you water out of this rock?"* But what was the consequence? God did not indeed disappoint the people on account of the sin of his servant. He gave the water, as he had declared he would, when he directed Moses to smite the rock. But he resented the presumption of his servant, by declaring that he should never enter into the promised land: nor would any intreaty induce him to alter that determination. And Moses died in the wilderness, because "he spake unadvisedly with his lips."

But there is a still more remarkable feature of the miracles wrought under the New Testament. The apostles wrought their miracles in the name of Jesus. They would have shuddered at the impiety of permitting any one, for a moment, to imagine that they performed their mighty works in virtue of any power that resided in them; and they constantly mentioned the name of Jesus, after he had left the world, as that mighty name which controlled all the laws of nature. When Peter and John gave strength

* Num. xx. 10.

to the impotent man at the beautiful gate of the temple, they spake in the name of Jesus. Acts iii. 6—"Then Peter said, silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." And when they saw the people gazing on them, as if they were ascribing to them the merit of this wonderful work, they said, verses 12—16. "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus;—and his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong." Here the apostles placed themselves on a totally different footing from the Lord Jesus, with regard to the working of miracles. They wrought no miracle in their own name, nor did any one, after they had gone to their rest and their reward, work miracles in their name; but they wrought their miracles in the name of Jesus. They received no glory from their miracles; on the contrary, they abjured all the glory of them, and directed the people to the Lord Jesus, as the person to whom the glory belonged. They declared that it was his name, and by faith in his name, that the miracle had been performed. They indeed refer the power to God,—"The God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," said they, "hath glorified his Son Jesus." But still the very object of the miracle is stated to be the glorifying of the Lord Jesus, which would be altogether foreign to the principles of Scripture, if Jesus were a mere creature. No miracle is ever said to have been wrought for the glory of any mere man; more especially if that man has been removed from

this world into the world of spirits. That the power by which the man Christ Jesus wrought his miracles, and by which miracles were wrought in his name, was from God, is doubtless true; as will be more fully explained and illustrated in a future chapter: but still, while the apostles abjured all honour to themselves, as if it would have been presumption and impiety to accept of it, they gave the honour to Jesus—they wrought the miracle in his name, and ascribed it to the power of his name, and they declared that God glorified his Son in the miracle.

But when Jesus wrought miracles he used no such precaution as that which was used by the apostles. He simply commanded, and it stood fast; and, when homage was paid to him as the author of the miracle, he received it. Now, is it conceivable that Jesus, who was more feelingly alive to the honour of his Father than any prophet or apostle, who was to set before the whole world an example of perfect sanctity—of the perfect fulfilment of duty, should manifest less anxiety about the glory of God than any of his own disciples? Our author says, that the argument founded on our Lord's receiving such worship as the apostles refused is invalid, because our Lord tells us of a servant who, being unable to discharge a debt, fell down at his master's feet and worshipped him. "The master," he adds, "did not reject the worship, and therefore, according to the Trinitarian mode of making clear 'logical solutions,' the master received divine honours, and should be adored as God."* But this is a fine illustration of the "summary mode in which" Unitarianism "rushes

* Page 50, Ed. 2d.

to her conclusions." He has omitted more than one element of the demonstration. It does not follow that, because *any one* receives divine honours, he is to be acknowledged and adored as God. Our author should first have proved that the master was represented by our Lord as infallible, and then his having received divine honours would have proved him to be God. He further infers that, because the same word, *worship*, is used to describe the obeisance which the servant paid to his master, which is used to describe the obeisance which Jesus received, and his apostles declined, the same worship was offered in both cases. But here also he rushes towards his conclusion without clearing his way to it. The worship which Jesus received, and which his apostles refused, was an obeisance by which the glory of some work of God was ascribed to him or to them. It does not appear that any of the servants of God would have refused an ordinary obeisance; but neither Peter nor Paul, nor any servant of Christ, would ever have consented to receive an obeisance which implied an ascription of honour to them, on account of any miraculous work that they had performed. This species of honour, however, Jesus never refused; he was worshipped as the author of the deliverances which he wrought; he received that worship; he thus permitted himself to be worshipped as God; he was infallible, and therefore he is God.

I hold that the title, SAVIOUR, in the absolute, emphatic manner in which it is given to the Lord Jesus, and that too in a religious sense, with reference to the salvation of the soul, is a title which could not, without idolatry, be given to any creature. Nor is there a single instance in Scripture of that title being given to any

mere man, or any created being. It is a title which God repeatedly claims as exclusively his own. Thus, Psalm cvi. 21—"They forgat God their SAVIOUR." Isa. xliii. 3, 11—"For I am the LORD thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy SAVIOUR. I, even I am Jehovah, *and besides me there is no* SAVIOUR." Isa. xlv. 21, 22. "There is no God else besides me; a just God and a SAVIOUR; there is none beside me. Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Hos. xiii. 4—"Thou shalt know no God but me: for there is no SAVIOUR besides me." Need I say that this title, SAVIOUR, is given to the Lord Jesus in the New Testament, and that it is given to no one else? It is indeed one of the most common titles by which he is designated: and it is given to him in the very highest sense in which it can be given, namely, as saving us from our sins—saving our souls from perdition. The Lord Jehovah proclaims himself in the Old Testament as the SAVIOUR, the ONLY SAVIOUR; and says, "look unto me, all the ends of the earth, and be ye saved." And Jesus, in the New Testament, is emphatically and exclusively called the SAVIOUR, and we are directed to come to him, to believe on him, to look to him, (the same direction that is given by Isaiah with reference to God) to "look for his mercy."* Let any one recollect that the title, SAVIOUR, is the appropriate and peculiar title of Christ in the New Testament, so that even our author speaks of the *blessed Saviour*, without explanation, as referring, not to God, but to the Lord Jesus; that no prophet, or apostle, or minister of religion, nor any created being is ever in the whole Bible called THE SAVIOUR, and then let

* Jude 21.

him read the following words of Jude: "To the only wise God OUR SAVIOUR, be glory, and majesty, dominion, and power, both now and ever. Amen."* Again, I ask, is it conceivable that in a book, one great object of which is to abolish idolatry, there should be such a confusion of these all-important titles—THE LORD and THE SAVIOUR, that it is impossible to say, with any degree of certainty, when the supreme God, and when a mere man, or a mere creature, is designated by them? I feel myself obliged to come to the conclusion, which I express without one spark of animosity or unkind feeling, but as the necessary result of these principles which appear to me to be the principles of Scripture, that, when our author, or any one else, gives this title of *the Saviour—the blessed Saviour*, to the Lord Jesus, believing him, at the same time, to be a mere creature, he is guilty of idolatry. He is ascribing the glory of the salvation of souls to a creature; although the God of heaven, again and again, declares that he is the only Saviour, and that there is none else besides him.

Our author asserts that the Lord Jesus no where receives *praise*, as expressed by the word *aineo*, for any of his works. In this I conceive he is in error. For when the people conducted him in triumph to Jerusalem, and the children were crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David," Jesus himself applied to them the words of the eighth Psalm, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected *praise*" (*ainon*). But the application of a *word* is of little moment, when it can be shown, that, *in fact*, praise is frequently addressed to

* Jude 25.

the Lord Jesus. Thus, Psalm lxviii. 18. "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them." This Psalm is unquestionably a hymn of praise to the God of Israel. It commences with the very words which Moses used in the wilderness, "When the ark set forward:" "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him."* And the whole of the Psalm is a celebration of the mighty works of the Lord, which had been previously wrought in the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, and which were yet to be wrought in their behalf. Now the apostle Paul quotes these words as being addressed to Christ, and he quotes them, not in the way of allusion or accommodation, for he founds an argument upon them so understood. Eph. iv. 8—11—"Wherefore he saith, when he, ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things; and he gave some apostles, and some prophets," &c. Again, Psalm xlv. 6—"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." Who would for a moment hesitate to address these words in praise to the King of heaven? Who would dare to address them to any one else? And yet we find these words applied by the apostle Paul to the Son; and the application admitted by our author. Heb. i. 8—"Unto the Son he saith, thy throne,

* Psalm lxviii. 1. Numb. x. 35.

O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Still again, Psalm cii. 25—27. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." This, our author not only admits, but asserts, is an address to Jehovah; and a more sublime address can scarcely be conceived. Yet, we have already seen, that even this hymn of praise the apostle Paul declares to have been also addressed to the Son. Heb. i. 10—12. Yet again, Rev. i. 5, 6—"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father," (i. e. to him who is his God and Father) "to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Here is the praise of our salvation addressed to the Redeemer. Nor can our author allege that it may be God who is addressed, and that, by *his own blood*, may be meant *his own son;* as he does respecting another passage, in which this expression is used. This strange hypothesis is altogether excluded here, because Jesus is celebrated for making us kings and priests to his God and *Father*. The hymn of praise therefore is addressed, not to the Father, but to the Son.

I conclude the enumeration of these ascriptions of praise to the Redeemer, with that glorious scene which is described, Rev. v. 8—14. "The four living creatures and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung

a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever..'" Those who can imagine that such adoration and praise may, without idolatry, be addressed to a creature, surely ought to feel no scruple about singing the praises of Jesus in their worshipping assemblies. It is pleaded that this scene is a vision, and that the homage here described is paid by emblematical persons to an emblematical representation of the Saviour. Our author can scarcely avail himself of this plea, as he has attempted to produce, from the same vision, an example of the Lord Jesus declining an expression of ordinary homage, paid to him by his own apostle. Besides, if the vision is emblematical, what do its emblems import? They must mean something, else they would not be introduced into the book of God. Now, I put it to the candour of Unitarians to say, whether, if they do not

teach the lawfulness of worshipping the Lord Jesus, they are not calculated to mislead. Let it be supposed that such a scene were described in an allegory, or fictitious vision or dream, written by any Trinitarian, without authority from Scripture, I ask whether they would not assert that he was attempting to elevate the Saviour, in the estimation of his readers, to a station infinitely higher than the Scripture assigned to him; and that by associating him, even in an allegory or vision, in the same universal hymn of praise with Jehovah that sitteth upon the throne, he was guilty of most daring presumption? Yet this scene was exhibited by the Holy Spirit of God to an apostle, and described for our instruction, under the impulse and direction of inspiration; and it would be extremely difficult to extract any other meaning from it, than, that it represents the whole creation worshipping, adoring, praising him who was "brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and who, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, opened not his mouth"—"the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

CHAP. X.

THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST INCONSISTENT WITH HIS BEING A MERE CREATURE.

Let us now lay aside verbal criticism, and compare the great fundamental, practical, principles of Scripture, with the declarations respecting the glory and exaltation of the Saviour, and the duties required of his people towards him, and we shall find new ground to believe that he is more than a creature, even the omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent God.

If there be one doctrine more prominent in Scripture than another, it is that the Lord God alone is to be exalted in our adoration, our faith, our hope, our obedience, and in our gratitude for our temporal and spiritual mercies; that all good is to be viewed as coming from him; that him, and him only we are to serve; that his law is to be the rule of our conduct; that his favour is to be the object of our highest desire; that his presence and love are to be the sources of our enjoyment, now and for ever. All creatures are treated but as his servants—'ministers of his that do his pleasure.' Various offices and orders, in subordination to one another, are appointed, for the regulation of his subjects; and we are required to be in subjection to such authorities as are established by him: but all these

subordinate authorities are continually represented as having been established, not for the glory of those who are appointed to exercise them, but for his glory, and the benefit of those who are made subject to them. There is nothing in Scripture of the nature of an arrangement for exalting any creature, and giving him glory in the sight of others of his fellow creatures.—Moses, for example, was not employed to command the Israelites in their march out of Egypt to the land of promise, for his own glory or exaltation. Moses was merely a minister or servant, appointed to a certain duty, for the benefit of those who were committed to his care, and for the glory of God. Joshua was not appointed to lead them against the Canaanites, that he might obtain honour and renown; but merely that he might fulfil a certain service to God and his redeemed people. And so, in the Christian church, Peter and Paul, James and John, and the other apostles, were not appointed to the apostleship, that they might receive glory and honour from the church, but that they might be servants of the church; agreeably to the scale of rank established by our Lord—'He that is greatest must be the servant of all.'

Accordingly we find no honour conferred on any servant of God after he was removed from the world. While these holy men were in the world, they were entitled to honour for their Master's sake, and they might reasonably expect to enjoy a share of the affections of those among whom they laboured so diligently and so faithfully, partly for their work's sake, and partly in conformity with the general law respecting the love of our neighbours, and with the Christian commandment to love the brethren. But no honour is appointed for them since their decease.

There is no such thing in the whole word of God as a command to love, or respect, or honour Abraham, or Moses, or Joshua, or David, or Solomon, or Peter, or Paul, after they had left the world. The latter apostle says, that it appeared to him, as if "God had set forth the apostles last, as it were appointed to death," that "they were made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels and to men; and were made as the filth of the earth—the off-scouring of all things." This was their honour while they were in the world, and when they died no honour was provided for their memory, no token of respect was to be paid to them, no rite or ordinance to preserve a grateful recollection of their labours. The Virgin Mary says, in her hymn of gratitude, that all generations should call her blessed, because she was to be the mother of the Messiah according to the flesh: but there is no act of reverence, no expression of love or veneration appointed to be paid to her, either during her life on earth, or after her decease.

And in all this, while the Scripture is diametrically opposed to the propensities and practices of men, who are ever prone to institute, in one form or another, commemorations of the illustrious dead, and to inculcate love and respect for their memory, it is beautifully consistent with itself. To love any person, supposes that that person knows that we love him, and that he is in a condition to return our affection by a corresponding love. To require us to love any person, therefore, who is separated from us by the gulf that separates the invisible from the visible world, would have been to declare that person present with us, conscious of our affection, and capable of requiting it. To regulate

our conduct by what we suppose would be acceptable to a deceased person, is an act of worship, similar to kissing the hand, or bowing the knee to him. To present such departed persons before our minds as objects of gratitude and obedience, to seek to please them, or to avoid offending them, is to suppose them to be present, and it is to ascribe to them that description of invisible presence and influence, which, as a motive to love and obedience, cannot, without at least extreme danger of idolatry, if not actual idolatry, be attributed to any other than to God. There is, therefore, no command to love or respect any being in the world of spirits but God only. With regard to loving or respecting the memory of any one, it is natural to the human mind to remember with affection those whom we have loved during their lives; and, when not abused, may be regarded not only as a harmless, but even as an amiable feeling. But it is pertinent to say, that there is no command or direction for it in the word of God. And one reason in all probability is, that any such command or direction would have laid the foundation for an inference, that deceased persons are conscious of our feelings towards them, and would have led to endless superstitions and abuses. God does not require of us so hopeless, so unprofitable, and, I may say, so impracticable a task, as to love those who can know nothing of our love to them, and who are therefore incapable of requiting it with a return of affection. There are, therefore, but two commands respecting love—the one is, to love the Lord God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and mind; the other is, to love our neighbours as ourselves. But, when a person has passed into the world of spirits, he has ceased to be our neighbour, and therefore ceases

to be included in this law. Although we are told that angels are sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation, and although, therefore, we have reason to believe that they are sometimes at least present with us; yet, as we have no knowledge of them individually, as we have no means of knowing whether they are acquainted with any particular part of our conduct or our feelings, or whether they are capable of returning any gratitude or affection that we should feel for them, there is no injunction or encouragement in Scripture to love angels, or to do them any obeisance or reverence.

But how very differently the Lord Jesus is treated in the whole of the New Testament I need scarcely describe at length.

In the first place, all things, and especially the Christian dispensation, are made subservient to his glory. After the enumeration of all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, as created by him, in Col. i. 16, it is added, "And for him." All things were created, not only *by* him, but *for* him. Now it matters not what interpretation may be put on the words, *all things*. I maintain that if any thing was created *for* him, more especially if what is described in such comprehensive and magnificent terms as, "All things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers," were created for him, a glory is ascribed to him which, on the supposition of his being a mere creature, is in direct opposition to the great practical principles and uniform tenour of the Scriptures.

The whole Christian dispensation seems to be

a scheme for advancing the glory of the Saviour. His undertaking our salvation is ascribed to his spontaneous compassion, that selected sinners of the human race, while it rejected angels. All power and authority in heaven and in earth is committed into his hands. All the laws of nature are made to testify to his majesty. Every thing is represented as glorious and dignified in proportion to the closeness of its relation to him. The second temple is more glorious than the first, because, although the ark of the covenant and the Shechinah were not granted to the second, yet Jesus was to appear in it. John the Baptist is declared to be greater than all the prophets, yea, more than a prophet, because he was the immediate harbinger of the Saviour. Angels announced his birth with songs of joy. Jesus is the only LORD of his people, no one is to be called master but he. Angels frequently appeared ministering to him, and Moses and Elias, at his transfiguration, were sent from heaven to do him honour. At his death the sun was darkened, the rocks rent, graves were opened, the vail of the temple was rent in twain. Hymns of praise had been prepared for centuries to celebrate the victory achieved by his death, and his ascension to heaven. Now he is represented as reigning in heaven, controlling and regulating all things for his body, the church. In the rite of baptism, by which members are received as disciples in his name, he is associated with the Father Almighty and the eternal Spirit.

He is the only mediator between God and man. No man can come to the Father but by him. He is placed, as it were, between the whole human race and the eternal, invisible God; so that whosoever would come to God,

to offer their adorations, to prefer their petitions, to look for all necessary blessings, must come to God in him; even as the Israelites were required to present themselves before the Shechinah, with their offerings and their worship. For God is, in him, reconciling the world to himself; and has treasured up in him every good gift,—even all the fulness of the Godhead, that we, by coming to him, "may receive out of his fulness, even grace for grace." He is to judge the quick and the dead; nay, and what is still more decisive, the awards of that day are to be determined by personal attachment to him, or neglect of him. The king will say to those on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink,—inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me. And he shall say to those on his left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it not to me." Thus is he set at the right hand of God, "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." And thus he shall "reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet;" "For God hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, of beings on earth, and of beings under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory

of God the Father." And the consummation of the glory of the Redeemer is, as we have seen, the whole assembled creation, ascribing to him the honour of the salvation of his people, and associating him in the same hymn of praise with the great Creator.

It is true, that all this exaltation of the Lord Jesus is said to be to the glory of God—the Father of all. But where is there another instance in the whole Scripture of the glory of God and the glory of a creature being so identified, that the more highly the creature is exalted above other creatures, the more is God glorified? The very reverse of this rule is the principle acted upon with regard to all other persons. Every creature must be humbled, that God may be exalted. Even the chosen servants of Christ must be laid low as in the dust,—must become as nothing, that the Lord alone may be glorified. But Jesus is exalted, that God may be glorified. Every knee is to be made to bow to him, of beings in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth, and all this to the glory of God the Father.

In the second place, in perfect consistency with this high exaltation of the Saviour, are the commands and directions given to us respecting him. He is to be the object of our faith; we are to look to him for salvation, to believe in him, assured that, as our Saviour, he hath abolished death, hath brought life and immortality to light, and is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him. We are to seek to know him, and the knowledge of him is put on a footing of equality with the knowledge of God, as having in it eternal life; "This," said he, "is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only

true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."* And the apostle Paul says, "I count all things but loss, that I may win Christ,—that I may know him."† We are directed to look to him for strength in every time of difficulty, and to expect that his strength will be perfected in our weakness. Nay, we are exhorted to look for his mercy, and we are told that it is by his grace or favour that we are saved. Let any one, who has obtained a competent knowledge of Scripture, imagine the grace or favour, the compassion or mercy of Moses, or Paul, or Peter, or of any other deceased servant of Christ, to be spoken of, and he will at once discern how utterly incongruous such language is to the condition of a creature. Let any one imagine Peter, instead of Jesus, in approaching Jerusalem, to have wept over that city, and to have said, "O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I" (Peter) "have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not;" and the presumption of such language in the mouth of a creature becomes strikingly apparent. The image of a hen gathering her chickens under her wings, is the same image under which the God of Israel represents the tender care which he exercises over his people.‡ Jesus in these words plainly identifies himself with that God, who, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem were persecuting and murdering his servants, was continually calling to them to return to him, that he might not execute his vengeance

* John xvii. 3. † Philip. iii. 8—10. ‡ Deut. xxxii. 11. Psalm xci. 4.

upon them, but might cover them, by his overshadowing power, from the enemies that were rising up against them on every side.

We are commanded to love the Lord Jesus Christ. While, as has been already observed, there is not in the whole Bible a command or direction to love any servant of God, however eminent, after his departure from this visible world, the love of Jesus is required under the same sanctions with the love of God himself. "If any man," says the apostle, "love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maran-atha."* What more could be said in requiring love to God? And Christians are expected to love him even while he is unseen. "Whom," says the apostle Peter, "having not seen, ye love."† The only expression in the Bible that bears any resemblance to this, is in reference to the invisible God—"He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen."‡

We are to testify our love to Christ by keeping his commandments. The great incitement to the fulfilment of all moral duties held out in the New Testament is personal attachment to the Redeemer. His love to us, in giving himself for us, is the motive continually presented to us to live, not for ourselves, but for him. His love in dying for us, we are told, should make us willing even "to lay down our lives for the brethren." Now I confess I cannot conceive of any one placed more perfectly on a footing with God, than the law of God being called his law and his commandments; and that, not merely in the sense of his having been employed to promulgate the law, as the Jewish

* 1 Cor. xvi. 22. † 1 Peter i. 8. ‡ 1 John iv. 20.

law is sometimes called the law of Moses; nor even in the sense of his being employed to administer the law, and to bestow its rewards, and inflict its punishments, (even that being an office which could never be executed without Divine attributes); but in the still higher sense, of his being held up as containing in himself the great motives to obedience, and thus treated as the very fountain of authority. We are further required, as a testimony of our love to him, to commemorate him. Every Lord's-day we are reminded of his resurrection; and reminded, too, that that was an event of more importance to us than the creation of the world. We are commanded to commemorate his death from time to time, in an act of solemn religious worship. Where, again, I ask, is any such expression of respect directed to be paid to any servant of God? And what more distinct recognition could we have of his omniscience and omnipresence? Where shall we find such a solecism in the word of God, as a direction to commemorate a person, who, we are, at the same time, taught to believe, is altogether insensible of the respect that we are paying to him?

In perfect and beautiful conformity with these commands to love the Lord Jesus Christ, we are taught that he loves us. "He that loveth me," saith he, "shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and WE will come to him, and make our abode with him."* Is there an angel in heaven that dares to use such language—to place his love and the love of the eternal Jehovah on an equal

* John xiv. 21, 23.

footing; and to include that glorious Being, before whom he prostrates himself in lowliest adoration, in the same pronoun, WE, and the same promise, "WE will come to him?" It is impossible. We are further informed that, having "a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God—we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities."* These declarations, that Jesus is still with his people, and still loves them, are necessary to vindicate and explain the commands given to us to love and to commemorate him.

Still further, we are directed to look forward to the prospect of seeing the Redeemer in his glory, and enjoying his love for ever, as to the great consummation of our hopes. "Father," said he, "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."† "To him," says he again, "that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne."‡ The very glory of the heavenly Jerusalem is represented as consisting in the presence of God and the Lamb. "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them," (those that "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb") "and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."‖ There shall be no temple in that heavenly Jerusalem, "For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city

* Heb. iv. 14, 15. † John xvii. 24. ‡ Rev. iii. 21.
‖ Rev. vii. 14, 17.

had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads."*

Now what is all this but deifying the Lord Jesus—setting him forth as God to the world and to the church? A whole dispensation, in which the eternal happiness or misery of myriads of immortal creatures is involved, rendered subservient to his glory; and myriads of redeemed, purified, glorified spirits taught to look up to him as their Saviour and Lord, the fountain of their hopes, the object of their faith, and love, and obedience, and the source of their eternal happiness.

It is true, that in all this he is associated with the King eternal, immortal, and invisible. It is true, that it is upon his union with the Father of all—the God who fills heaven and earth with his presence, that all his glory depends. We know that it is not the man Christ Jesus that is thus the object of all our hopes; but that it is God as manifested in the man Christ Jesus. We do not believe that a God is thus set up to be worshipped *along with the supreme God;* and yet separate from him; but we believe that God is to be worshipped, that he is to be the object of our faith and love, as manifest in Christ Jesus;—that, in short, to use the apostle's language, we are to see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" that "we all, with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord," May be "changed into the same image

* Rev. xxi. 22, 23. xxii. 3, 4.

from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*

But still, Jesus Christ being thus "the brightness of the Father's glory—the express image of his person," was "God manifest in the flesh." And it is only in virtue of his possessing the nature, and character, and attributes of God, that he could, now that he is "unseen," ever be presented to us as an object of faith, and love, and obedience, and the very consummation of our hopes. If Jesus were a mere creature, he could never have been permitted to intercept and concentrate upon his own person the regards of the chosen and sanctified people of God. The noble spirit of man was not made to be the servant of a servant. Its dignity is, that it acts under the immediate eye and authority of God himself. It is the offspring of God, and, in its original holy condition, or its regenerated and sanctified condition, it as naturally aspires to the God who made it, as the flame rises upward. Convince any soul of man that Jesus is but a creature, and it could never be satisfied with his presence, or with the view of his glory. It would still pant after the manifested presence of the eternal Jehovah. Like Moses, it would still say, "Lord, show me thy glory," or, like Philip, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." But the answer must still be that which our Lord gave to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, that is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him." Jesus is "the brightness of the Father's glory," and therefore, in him, we shall see all that can be made visible of the eternal, invisible God.

* 2 Cor iv. 6. iii. 18.

CHAP. XI.

RECAPITULATION.

BEFORE we pass from that part of our subject with which we have for some time been occupied, it will be proper to cast our eye back on the progress that we have made.

Having cleared our way, by laying down and establishing the principles on which we should proceed, we commenced our advance by showing that Jesus was more than a mere man. And here I must remind the reader, that, in establishing that point, I referred chiefly to texts which did not directly bear upon his being the true God. I have now, therefore, to recommend to him, to add to the passages of Scripture then adduced, those which have since been adduced to prove that Jesus is God; and to consider whether it be possible that, after all the glorious things which are spoken of the Saviour, he should, according to the Scripture account of him, be nothing more than a mere man, who had no existence before he appeared in the world as Jesus of Nazareth. For the fact that Jesus was more than man, bears as directly against our author's whole system, as the fact that he was God.

In proceeding to prove that Jesus "is the true God and eternal life," we considered what is to be understood by a manifestation of God in

human nature, and compared such a manifestation of the supreme Being, with the manifestations of him under the Old Testament dispensation, in the Shechinah of the Jewish tabernacle and temple. And we found reason to determine, that human nature—a human soul and body—the holy feelings and benevolent affections of a man in the highest state of moral purity, furnished a much more perfect, more expressive, more instructive, and more spiritual manifestation of the invisible God, than a flame of fire, or any dazzling brightness could furnish.

We then proceeded to show that the Lord Jesus Christ is, in very many particulars, identified in Scripture with the God of the Israelites, who dwelt among them by the visible manifestations of his presence. And we took occasion to observe, that, if any one were required to identify the God of Israel, with the God who is described in the Old Testament as the God of the universe, he would be obliged to have recourse to the same description of evidence—that he would be limited to the same description of texts, and would have to encounter the same system of criticism, the same objections from apparently contradictory texts, and from supposed dictates of reason and common sense;—in short, that his whole argument would necessarily assume nearly the same form with that, by which we are under the necessity of identifying the Lord Jesus with the God of Israel.

We then found that the same titles and names are given to Jesus that are given to the God of Israel. That the Hebrew title God is given to Jesus, although it is given to no other individual, without such limitations as evince that it is a false god that is meant.* That the proper name

* When God said to Moses, "I have made thee a God to

Jehovah is given to him, and to no one else. That he, as well as the God of Israel, is called THE LORD, and the KING OF KINGS and LORD of LORDS, titles which, in that absolute manner, and as expressing dominion over the whole church, or the whole world, are never given to any other person.

We found, further, that the peculiar characters and attributes, and works which are ascribed to the God of Israel, are ascribed to the Lord Jesus. "I," said the God of Israel, "am the first and the last:"—"I" said Jesus, "am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last." The God of Israel promises to be with his people at all times, and especially when they presented themselves at the place where he had recorded *his name;*—Jesus says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world;" and, "Wherever two or three are met together *in my name*, there am I in the midst of them." The God of Israel created the heavens and the earth, and all things that are therein;—Jesus "laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of his hands;" he "created all things that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible." The God of Israel raised the Lord Jesus from the dead; Jesus raised himself from the dead. The God of Israel declares that he is the only Saviour, and invites all the ends of the earth to look to him for salvation;—the Lord Jesus is THE SAVIOUR, and his name is the *only* name by which we can be saved, and we are directed to look for his mercy. The God of Israel is the Redeemer of his people, who bought them;—Jesus is THE REDEEMER, who purchased his people by his own blood. The

Pharaoh," he did not give the appellation God to him; but merely intimated that he was to be instead of God, in declaring to Pharaoh the Divine will.

God of Israel is called the holy *One* of Israel;—Jesus is the holy *one* and the just, whom the Jews denied. The God of Israel is the shepherd of his people;—the Lord Jesus is the good shepherd; nor is there any shepherd over all the flock but he. The God of Israel is he who alone can build up his church;—Jesus said, "On this rock *I will build my* church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The God of Israel declares that our salvation flows from his grace, and mercy, and love, and compassion;—our salvation flows also from the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, from his mercy, and love, and compassion. The God of Israel reveals himself as the judge of all the earth, and declares that he will come with flaming fire, surrounded by his angels, to judge the world in righteousness, and to render to every one according to his deeds;—Jesus says, 'the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son;' and that it is he who is to come, with power and great glory, to judge the quick and the dead, and to render to every one according to his deeds. The God of Israel declares that, at the judgment of the great day, he will give command to gather his saints together, who have made a covenant *with him* by sacrifice;—the Lord Jesus will assemble at his right hand all who have attached themselves to *him* by faith in *his* sacrifice, and who have testified their attachment to *him*, by their love and kindness to *his* disciples. The God of Israel is the light of his people—"The Lord," says the Psalmist, "is my light and my salvation;"—Jesus is the light of the world and of the church. The glory of the invisible God was manifested in the Shechinah, which was called *the glory of God;*—the glory of God is manifested in the face of

Jesus Christ, and he is called "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." The Shechinah, or symbol of the Divine presence, was a dazzling light, or a bright cloud;—the Lord Jesus assumed, at his transfiguration, that very appearance, in the sight of three of his apostles, as before three competent witnesses, for the very purpose, it would seem, of personally identifying him with that glory of God which appeared to their fathers; but as he was then living among men, in fashion as a man, they were commanded not to divulge what they had seen, till his permanent exaltation to his glory. The presence of the Lord Jehovah is to be the joy of his people in the heavenly state, and his redeemed people shall be satisfied when they behold his glory;—it is the presence of Christ, and the beholding the glory of Christ, that is set before the people of God, as the consummation of their hopes. The Lord Jehovah, that sitteth on the throne, is the light and the temple of the new Jerusalem;—the Lamb is the light thereof, and the temple thereof. And, to crown this identity, several passages of Scripture which, in the Old Testament, refer to the God of Israel, or are addressed to him, are in the New Testament declared to refer to Christ, or to be addressed to Christ.

In perfect conformity with this identity of the names, titles, character, attributes, works, offices, manifestations of God and of Christ, are the duties that are required of us. We are to believe in, trust to, rely upon God;—we are to believe in, trust to, rely upon Christ: to look to God for *his* mercy;—to look for the mercy of Christ: to love the unseen God;—to love the unseen Christ: to obey God and keep *his* commandments;—to obey Christ and keep *his* command-

ments: to do all things from love to God;—to do all things from love to Christ—to live, not to ourselves, but to him, because he died for us. The ancient church commemorated the work of God in the creation, by the weekly Sabbath;—the Christian church, while it does not lose sight of creation, by the change of the day, directs her attention more particularly to the work of Christ in his resurrection. The ancient church in the passover commemorated the work of God in her deliverance from Egypt;—the Christian church in the Lord's supper commemorates the work of Christ in her deliverance from the bondage of sin and Satan, by his death; for "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."—The ancient servants of God were distinguished from the whole world, as persons who called on the name of Jehovah;—Christians are distinguished from the whole world, as persons who call on the name of Christ. And, finally, we have the example of the redeemed in heaven, for associating God who sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb that was slain, in the same hymn of praise.

In all these points there is a perfect identity of the Saviour with God supreme; and let not our author, or any other Unitarian, accuse us of rushing to a summary conclusion, by merely bringing forward particulars that are predicated both of God and of Christ, and then inferring that they are the same. Our argument is, that all those particulars which have been enumerated are peculiar to God, that not one of them can be predicated of any mere servant of God, and that they could not be predicated of Christ if he were not the true God. For example, it is never said in Scripture, and could not be said without falsehood or idolatry, of Abraham, or of Moses,

or of Paul, or of Peter, that he is God, or a God, (without such a limitation as to show that, in a particular transaction, he was made to stand instead of God); or that he is Jehovah; or that he created the heavens and the earth in any sense whatsoever; or that he is, especially since his death, THE LORD, or the Lord of lords and King of kings; or that he is with his disciples wherever they meet *in his name;* or that he is THE SAVIOUR, or the REDEEMER, or the HOLY ONE; or that he is *the* shepherd of the church, or *the* judge of the world; or that he is the brightness of the glory of God. Nor did ever any of these servants of God assume the very appearance of the Shechinah. Nor is it ever held out to the people of God as a promise, that they shall see the glory of any of these servants of the Lord, or that any, or all of them shall be the light, and glory, and temple of the new Jerusalem. Neither are we commanded to believe *in*, or trust *to*, any of these good men, or to love them, since their decease, or to commemorate them, or to do any thing to please them, much less to regulate our whole lives with a view to their glory; nor are we to call upon their names, or sing hymns to their praise. In all these respects the Redeemer stands absolutely alone among men. It would be nothing short of profanity and blasphemy to treat any mere man as Jesus is treated; and yet in all these things he is identified with God, and treated as God is treated. If, therefore, Christ be not God, it must follow, that there are two beings, the one the Creator, the other a creature, who, in all the particulars that have been enumerated, are placed on the same footing, whom we are to regard equally as God, and to whom we are to conduct ourselves as it becomes

us to do to God only. And nothing can be more revolting to common sense, or to the principles and precepts of Scripture, the great fundamental doctrine of which is, that there is but one, the living and true God, who alone is vested with divine attributes, who alone does the works of God, and who alone is to be revered and loved and worshipped and served as God, than such a confounding of any creature with the revelation of the most high God.

We have had occasion to examine the criticisms, by which it is attempted to turn away many of the passages of Scripture, which thus identify the Lord Jesus with the God of Israel, from their proper and obvious meaning. We have had occasion to animadvert on the Unitarian system of criticism generally; and have more than once observed that the adoption of it would throw all language into uncertainty, and render it impossible to teach any doctrine, by any forms of expression, however precise.—We have in one or two instances observed that, if it were applied to the Old Testament Scripture, it would reduce the most sublime descriptions of the majesty of the one living God to bombastic poetry—hyperbolical descriptions of the greatness of human rulers.

Perhaps it may tend still more to put the public on their guard against the Unitarian principles of criticism, to exhibit somewhat more fully the tendency of it. Perhaps it may induce our author himself, and other Unitarians who may have been led to sanction it without looking forward to its consequences, to pause and consider what they do, before they determine to persevere in the use of it.

Let us, for this purpose, suppose an adversary of the Bible and of Christianity, to read the

work of our author, or any other work in which the same system of criticism is adopted. He has frequently found that one of the strongest arguments for the Divine inspiration of the Bible, and one which has given him most trouble, is the sublime and most rational system of religion which is taught in it. He has been perplexed, but not convinced by this fact, and has been in search of some means of breaking the force of that argument. He finds, from the writings of our author, that a great part of the Bible is written in figurative and hyperbolical language, after the manner of Oriental poetry, which is to be corrected by reason and common sense; that many of the sublimest phrases may be much lowered by little variations in the reading, or by finding different acceptations in which the same word is sometimes used; and that the authority of some parts of it are disputed even by professing Christians. In short, he conceives the idea, that, by bringing text against text, he may so confound the doctrine apparently taught in Scripture, that not one shred of the argument which has given him so much trouble would remain. He therefore takes up the Bible, and proposes, with the help of our author's admissions and example, boldly to prove that no such system of religion as has been attributed to it, is contained in it; that all that is valuable in it, has been the discovery of certain able and acute philosophers in more modern times, who have grafted their discoveries upon the Jewish Scriptures, as the most convenient vehicle for their purpose.

I shall leave the reader to imagine all that an ingenious man, with such an object in view, might say in praise of the learning, and talent, and candour of that class of Biblical critics, of

whose principles and admissions he meant to avail himself. I shall leave it to every person's own taste to supply all that our Deist might handsomely concede to the respectability and acuteness of our author—his amiable temper, his indefatigable research, as a preparation for availing himself of his writings to attack Christianity:—how he would represent him, and the class of religionists with whom he is connected, as the only persons among Christians who are worthy the notice of a philosopher for a single moment; and how that, although he could not fully coincide with him in all his opinions; yet he had often attended his preaching, and had been delighted with his elegant moral disquisitions. This necessary preparation being made, he commences his argument as follows.

'It has been usually imagined that the Hebrew Scriptures teach that there is one, and only one supreme God,—a spiritual being, every where present, omnipotent, eternal, and unchangeable: and some have conceived that the existence of such a doctrine, which even a philosophical Theist must acknowledge to be sublime and rational, in a book of so great antiquity, and written among so contemptible a people as the Jews, is a satisfactory evidence of a supernatural origin.

'But before we rush to so hasty a conclusion, it may be well to pause, and consider whether any such doctrine is really taught in that book. It would appear, from the accurate and learned investigations of the latest and ablest critics,—critics too who profess to believe in the Divine inspiration of the Bible, that no such doctrine is contained in it. The Reverend and learned Dr. Drummond, who, although an adversary to rational Theism, is, nevertheless, an honour to

'his profession, has demonstrated that by the 'term which is usually rendered *God* in the En- 'glish translation of the Bible, is meant the le- 'gislators and magistrates of the Jews. He 'finds that that title was given to Moses and all 'the other Jewish legislators;* and furnishes 'several instances of individual legislators or 'kings among them, being addressed by that 'title. He proves that Solomon, in a poem, 'written on the occasion of his marriage, is ad- 'dressed thus—" Thy throne O God is for ever 'and ever:" and even mentions a dignitary of 'the church of England who translated these 'words—" Thy throne *O prince* is for ever and 'ever." He states also and confirms his state- 'ment by the high authority of Rammohun 'Roy; who, being himself an oriental, may well 'be supposed to be familiar with the style of 'oriental poetry, that another prince, Hezekiah, 'was called, in a poem, written in his praise by 'Isaiah, " The mighty God." The same learn- 'ed and ingenious author insists that, in the New 'Testament, Jesus Christ, whom he yet believes 'to have been a mere man, has the same title 'given to him.

'This explains the whole difficulty. The 'Jews having risen up against the Egyptians, 'whose slaves they were, and having effected 'their escape from that country, appear to have 'established a sort of republic, under the go- 'vernment of magistrates chosen for life. The 'able and artful leaders, who had conducted 'them out of Egypt, and who had contrived to foil 'the attempts of the Egyptian army to recover 'them, procured histories and poems to be written, 'in which, according to the lofty hyperbolical 'style of the orientals, were described the power

* Page 21, Ed. 2d.

'and vigilance of their government. For example, it is asserted that these legislators, "in 'the beginning created the heavens and the 'earth." This however was not so revolting a 'statement as might at first sight be supposed; 'for the Reverend author to whom we are so 'much indebted, has shown that *the heavens and* '*the earth* meant, in the language of these 'writers, the ecclesiastical and civil polities of 'the Jews. The people therefore were taught, 'in those high sounding words, that their civil 'and ecclesiastical constitution originated in the 'wisdom of their rulers. The remainder of the 'description of what has usually been supposed 'to be an account of the creation of the world, 'may be explained in the same manner. The 'dividing the waters above from those beneath, 'and collecting the waters together, so that the 'dry land appeared, may signify the draining of 'marshes, and thus freeing the country from 'unwholesome damps. The clothing of the 'earth with vegitation, was the encouragement 'of agriculture. The peopling of the seas with 'fishes was the encouragement of fisheries. The 'sun was the chief civil, and the moon the chief 'ecclesiastical authority, the stars the inferior 'governors. The creating of cattle, &c., the enriching the country with flocks and herds: and 'the making of man out of the dust, signified 'merely converting a waste uninhabited country 'by wise regulations, into a well peopled kingdom. Perhaps the reader may be startled by 'such explanations, but I assure him that the 'very learned Christian author to whom I have 'alluded, shows that this style was quite familiar 'to the Jews; for that even in the New Testament, a part of the Bible written at so much 'later a period, it is asserted that Jesus Christ, a

'man who lived in the days of Augustus Cesar, '"made the world," and "created all things 'in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible," 'and proves that all that was meant by that lan-'guage was, that he made some changes in the 'Jewish civil and ecclesiastical constitution.

'In the same strain, attributes are ascribed to 'the Jewish government, which at first sight, 'appear to be the attributes of God; but which 'our candid and ingenious author admits may 'all be otherwise explained. Thus, eternal 'existence seems to be ascribed to their magis-'trates; but that signifies no more than that the 'government never dies. The power of the 'state is that supreme person who is said to 'inhabit eternity; that is, it is that one source 'of authority which existed from the beginning 'of the Jewish state, and was to continue to the 'end of it. For it can easily be proved, that the 'word rendered *eternity* frequently signifies a li-'mited, although very long period. The very 'learned and candid Doctor Bruce admits that 'eternal punishment signifies punishment only 'for a very long time; and Doctor Drummond 'shows us that the words, "yesterday, to-day, 'and for ever," applied to Christ, mean no more 'than that his doctrines and promises, having 'been committed to writing, can never change, 'but must remain always the same.

'Omnipresence appears to be ascribed to the 'Jewish magistracy; but, here again, our 'learned and able author proves that only a 'virtual presence is meant; for that the very 'same things are said of Moses, of Christ, of 'Paul, and of others who were mere men.— 'Thus when in one of those lofty hyperbolical 'poems it is said—

" Whither can I go from thy spirit,
" Or whither can I flee from thy presence?
" If I climb the heavens, thou art there;
" If I make my bed in the abyss, behold thou art there;
" If I lift my wings towards the morning,
" Or dwell beyond the bounds of the sea,
" Even there shall thy hand lead me,
" And thy right hand shall hold me.
" If I say surely the darkness shall cover me;
" Even the night shall be light about me.
" Yea the darkness hideth not from thee,
" But the light shineth as the day;
" As is the darkness,
" So is the light."

'All that we are to understand is a highly 'figurative and glowing description of the virtual 'ubiquity and power of the government. The 'Jewish poets thus attempted to impress upon 'the minds of the people, that it was impossible 'to resist or escape from the authority of their 'rulers. In perfect harmony with this, Solomon 'says—

" Curse not the king, no not in thy thought;
" And curse not the rich, (or powerful) in thy bed-chamber;
" For a bird of the air shall carry the voice,
" And that which hath wings shall tell the matter."

'Some of these poets, who were manifestly in 'the pay of their rulers, describe them as omni-'potent, creating every thing, doing every thing, 'having all power in their hands, whom no other '*Gods*, that is, no other rulers or princes, could 'resist. But our author shows that similar 'things are said of Christ; such for example, as 'that all power in heaven and in earth was in 'his hands, that all things are put under his

'feet, that he can raise the dead, nay, that he is 'the resurrection and the life; when nothing 'more is intended than that he is the head of 'the Christian religion, being the chief pro-'phet of it, and having a certain authority over 'the church.

'Omniscience also is ascribed to the Jewish 'legislators, in highly coloured figurative dic-'tion. For example, in an ode to their constitu-'tion, one of the poets says—"Thou, even thou 'only knowest the hearts of all the children of 'men." This seems very strong language; 'but our learned and indefatigable author shows, 'and confirms his opinion by that of Lindsey, 'one of the most acute scholars of the age, that, 'although similar language is used respecting 'Jesus Christ, although it is said of him that he 'searches the hearts and tries the reins of men, 'and that he knows what is in man; yet that he 'possessed no omniscience, but merely was gift-'ed with peculiar acuteness in detecting hypo-'crisy, and knew well the heresies which were 'harboured in one particular church.* There 'are however other singular expressions, by which 'the general knowledge of the Jewish legislators 'was described. One of their poets says— '"He," or rather, "that which," (alluding 'still to the government) "planted the ear, 'shall it not hear; that which formed the eye, 'shall it not see." One should imagine from 'this, that the Jewish poets ascribed the very 'formation of the human body to their magis-'trates. But this is too absurd a supposition to 'be entertained. Common sense and reason 'could see no object to be gained by such extra-'vagance. We must therefore look for some

* Page 41, Ed. 2d.

'other meaning. Nor shall we have far to look. 'The word אזן rendered *ear*, signifies also *a* 'balance, and the word עין rendered *eye* signifies 'also *a fountain*. Hence it is obvious that what 'the poet meant was, that the government ad- 'justed the weights and measures used in Judea; 'and that they also planned and constructed the 'wells and fountains; all of which perfectly har- 'monizes with their having collected together 'the water that was mingled with the earth, by 'draining the lands, as formerly noticed. Now, 'as the poet was illustrating the ubiquity of the 'government, and its knowledge of the state of 'every district of country and of every family, 'he, with admirable skill, selects the fountains of 'water which were necessarily scattered over 'the face of the land, and the balances which 'were used in every family, as indications that 'the knowledge and power of the government 'pervaded every place. Hence it is evident that 'the passage should be rendered—

"That which planted (or fixed unchangeably) the weights or balances,
"Shall it not hear?
"That which constructed the fountains (or wells),
"Shall it not see?

'To a person unaccustomed to the style of 'the Bible, this interpretation may seem some- 'what forced or unnatural; but if he will turn 'to our author's critique on the first five verses 'of the Gospel by John, which he will find in 'pages 42d and 43d of the 2d edition of his 'learned work, he will be satisfied that this ex- 'planation perfectly accords with the general 'strain of the Bible.

'Still further to impress the minds of the people with reverence for their government,

'and fear of its displeasure, the Hebrew poets 'employed all their powers of expression to des- 'cribe the visitations of their judges to different 'parts of the country, for the administration of 'justice. They speak of their going forth with a 'numerous attendance of angels or messengers— 'the forces of the state, with sound of trumpet, 'and flaming fire. From the latter expression, 'one might almost suspect that they were ac- 'quainted with the use of artillery. It would 'however be resting too much on an incidental, 'and obviously figurative form of expression, to 'infer from it that so philosophical a discovery had 'been made at so early an age, and among such a 'people;—although it must be admitted that it has 'been known for a very long period in China. 'It is not, however, improbable that the rulers 'of the nation were acquainted with some means 'of making explosions, which they used for the 'purpose of striking terror into the people when 'they went on their judicial circuits. That no- 'thing more than the ordinary administration of 'the law of the land was intended, and not the 'judging of men by the laws of morality, which 'take cognizance of the private conduct of indi- 'viduals, and even of their affections and desires 'and designs, is manifest from this fact, that it 'is declared that Christ will come to judgment, 'with the very same insignia of authority; although 'our learned author proves that he is a mere man, 'not vested with omniscience, an attribute which 'is manifestly necessary, in order to judge men 'by the moral law.

'But the most artful and extraordinary expe- 'dient employed by the rulers of this singular 'people, for the purpose of keeping continually 'before them the authority and power of the law, 'was to contrive a species of worship to be paid

'to the constitution. While other nations were
'worshipping images of former rulers or of ima-
'ginary beings, these crafty and shrewd legislators,
'made a chest, covered it with gold, placed in it
'a copy of the fundamental principles of the law
'engraved on stone; on the top of this chest they
'made a seat or throne which they called a mer-
'cy seat; they then erected a magnificent tent
'or tabernacle, while they were journeying from
'Egypt to Canaan and establishing themselves
'there, but which, after they were permanently
'settled, was exchanged for a noble temple or
'palace. There they deposited this chest accom-
'panied with a rod, the emblem of authority,
'and a pot of some description of food, such as
'they had fed upon in their journey, as an em-
'blem of the plenty to be expected by submit-
'ting to regular government. These matters
'being arranged, they made the people come to
'the tent or temple and do obeisance and pre-
'sent offerings. Three times a year was every
'male arrived at maturity obliged to appear
'and do obeisance to these symbols of govern-
'ment. There also, they, from time to time,
'slaughtered cattle; which was intended to
'teach the people that, if they transgressed the
'law, they would be slaughtered in the same
'same manner without mercy. When their
'government changed to a monarchy, David,
'one of the first of their kings, who was also
'himself a poet and musician, and who knew how
'to turn these accomplishments to good account,
'composed hymns in praise of the Gods or legisla-
'tors; and appointed a multitude of persons to
'sing them continually before the tent in which
'the emblems of government were deposited, ac-
'companied with all the various musical instru-
'ments then known.

'It is but just to observe, that the Reverend 'and worthy gentleman of whose learned ex- 'planations of the Bible, we have availed our- 'selves, does not draw the same inferences from 'it which have been drawn above. It appears 'to him to be a dictate of common sense and rea- 'son, that the Bible should teach that there is 'one God, an invisible eternal being, really ves- 'ted with those attributes, which are figuratively 'ascribed to the Jewish magistracy. And there- 'fore he, in these things, understands the Bi- 'ble literally. But what can be more inconsis- 'tent? he tells us, for example, that in the language 'of the prophets *heaven and earth* signify the 'civil and ecclesiastical polities of the Jews; that '*God* signifies the Jewish legislators and magis- 'trates; and yet he quotes passages from these very 'prophets, and these passages confessedly poeti- 'cal and figurative, and insists on the words, '*the heavens and the earth*, being understood liter- 'ally of the material heavens and earth, and on 'the word *God* being understood of the supreme 'being. If he would have us believe that these 'doctrines are in the Bible, let him point them 'out to us in language, the meaning of which 'cannot be disputed; but let him not seek to 'amuse us with language which, by his own 'showing, is ambiguous. We do not deny 'the reasonableness of the doctrine that there 'is a supreme being; but what can be more 'preposterous than to suppose that so rude a 'people, living in so rude an age, should 'have made a progress in that most abstruse 'and difficult of all speculations, the being 'and attributes of one supreme God, to which 'the most renowned sages of Greece and Rome 'never attained? It is much more rational to 'conclude, that, as the Jews were in the habit of

'calling their legislators *Gods*, these only are 'meant throughout the whole book, and that the 'lofty descriptions which are given of them are 'to be explained figuratively, in the manner 'which it has been attempted above.'

But I must not pursue this strain of mock criticism further. It seems to me to follow so directly and naturally from our author's premises, and must appear so plausible to those who have been accustomed to his style of commenting on Scripture, that I fear lest some one whom he has (I am sure inadvertently) led up to the brink of infidelity, should be induced to plunge into the gulf that yawns before him. Nor are these criticisms, ludicrous as they may appear, in any respect more absurd than many criticisms which have seriously been drawn from the same horrible system. The criticisms current among the Unitarians of the Continent of Europe, about whose hallelujahs our author writes very eloquently, are too blasphemous to be transcribed here: and such as I trust, he himself would reject with abhorrence, if they were proposed to him. But where lies the mischief? Obviously in those principles of criticism which, like the sweep of an inchanters wand, would convert that book, which, to a simple minded reader, who understands the language in its usual sense, and receives with faith the information expressed by it, conveys such a flood of light, so many glorious conceptions of the great Jehovah; that book which is the very source of all information respecting God, from which Deism itself derives whatever is rational or sublime in its speculations; that book which is the only antidote to idolatry, and which has banished idolatry from among every people who have perused it;—the mischief lies, I

say, in principles of criticism which could convert even such a book into a system of the most detestable state policy, of the most debasing idolatry that has ever been practised, idolatry combined with absolute atheism.

And let not the reader imagine that such a transformation of the Bible implies that there is a peculiar ambiguity and uncertainty in its language. No human language, no forms of expression, could bear the application of the same principles of criticism. Grant to me the same latitude of interpretation, permit me to avail myself of all the writings in verse and prose in the English language, all the odd anomalous uses that have been made of words in all sciences and arts, and I will undertake to find any subject in any book whatever. A system of astronomy might be converted by such principles of criticism, into a system of theology. The history of a nation might be allegorized into a book of heathen mythology. The most precise legal documents might be turned to utter confusion; mathematical demonstrations might be transformed into fables and allegories:—in short nothing could stand before it. It argues no ambiguity therefore in the Bible that, with such a range of discovery as that of which our author avails himself—not only all the senses in which all words may have been used, but all variations in the reading, all mistakes of transcribers, all mistranslations, all poetical forms of expression transplanted into prose narratives or discourses or epistles, he may find pleas for altering the obvious meaning of any text.

And what barrier does he raise up to withstand a flood of iniquity which his system of criticism would let in, to sweep away every vestige of revelation? Reason and common sense!!—

He would have it laid down as a fundamental maxim that every thing in Scripture must be conformable to reason and common sense. Thus whatever any man may deem rational, whatever he conceives to be the common sense view of any subject, he is to find in the Bible. If one man's reason and common sense tell him that there is a God, he may find a God revealed in the Bible; but if another man's reason and common sense tell him that the only God is the government of the country, he can, by the help of our author's system, find that no God is revealed but legislators and magistrates. If one man think that it is rational and proper that God should know all things, even the secrets of the heart, he will find countenance in the Bible for that idea; but if another man's nursery education has led him to suppose, that it is a much more dignified view of the Deity, to conceive of him as exercising a sort of general superintendence over great events, but as being too much occupied with weighty concerns to attend to the affairs of individuals, he has only to explain what is said of the omnipresence and omniscience of God, as figurative descriptions of a virtual omnipresence and omniscience, such as that which our author supposes to be ascribed to Jesus or to Moses or to Paul. If one man imagine that is just and proper that there should be a day of judgment and final retribution, he may find such a day expressly declared; but if another do not like the idea of such a reckoning, he has only to convert all that is said about it to poetry and allegory, and to imagine that it all refers to the judicial investigations of the Jewish magistrates, or to the coming of God by his providence to destroy the city of Jerusalem. In short the whole system is calculated to prostrate the word of God before

the reason or the prejudices of man, to divest it of all authority, and to leave every man at liberty to find in it whatever religious doctrines may be most suited to his taste.

And where lies the cure for all this mischief? Thanks be to God it is not far from us. It consists in reading the Scriptures under a sense of our ignorance, and with the teachableness of little children; in understanding the words and phrases according to their usual meaning, in the connexion in which they stand; in conceding to the sacred writers, that their inspiration did not deprive them of common sense and judgment, or induce them to mingle their prose narratives and instructions with the most extravagant flights of oriental poetry; in understanding them rather as expressing great ideas in simple language, when their simple language actually does convey great ideas, than poor and mean ideas in hyperbolical bombastic language; in reading the Bible, as we read any other book which treats of a subject of which we are totally ignorant, but on which we desire information, yet with a still deeper sense of our ignorance, and of the superiority of our instructors, than we feel in perusing any human compilation; in receiving with faith the loftiest and most abstruse of its declarations, as a child receives information which it cannot fully comprehend from its parents or teachers; and, above all, in habitual and earnest prayer to that God who dictated the Scripture, to open our understandings to its spiritual meaning, to open our hearts to receive it in the love of it, and to render it effectual for our conversion and edification. These are the natural barriers against the threatening deluge of fanciful and sceptical interpretations of Scripture.—To remove these and to erect reason and com-

mon sense in their place, is to stretch a cob-web as a defence from the force of a tempest.—He who reads the Bible in the humble and teachable spirit that becomes him; and who confines himself within the bounds of legitimate criticism, will not fail to understand it aright; and he who shall do so, I most firmly believe, whatever he may be at present, will not long be a Unitarian.

CHAP. XII.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED: CHRIST'S MEDIATORIAL KINGDOM.

We have, in our progress, considered our author's objections to our interpretation of those passages of Scripture on which the Deity of the Lord Jesus is established; and also his objections to that doctrine from its being, as he alleges absurd, gross, and heathenish. We have yet to consider those passages of Scripture which he adduces in opposition to the doctrine itself. These passages consist of declarations of Christ's inferiority to the Father, or of statements in which such an inferiority is implied. Before we examine such texts separately, it will be necessary to take a brief view of the nature of Christ's mediatorial kingdom.

1. The concurring testimony of many passages of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, represent the Lord Jesus as a king or ruler. This is the uniform tenor of revelation respecting him. When he was first announced to the world it was as the seed of the woman who should bruise the head of the serpent; that is, as is afterwards explained, who, as a conqueror, should triumph over Satan and his angels. The Psalmist, in the second Psalm, thus

declares his royal office in the name of Jehovah, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree, the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession:" —which words are applied by the apostle Paul to the Saviour.* In another Psalm the Son, as we have already seen, is thus addressed—"Thy throne O God is for ever and ever, the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre."† And he himself, when he was asked by Pilate whether he were the king of the Jews, answered, "Thou sayest it," but added "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."‡

With regard to the extent of his kingdom, in addition to what the Psalmist says of the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth being included in it, we read in the prophecies of Daniel as follows—"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."§ Jesus himself says, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth;"‖ and the

* Acts xiii. 33. † Psalm xlv. 6. Heb. i. 8. ‡ John xviii. 33—37. Luke xxiii. 3. § Dan. vii. 13, 14. ‖ Mat. xxviii. 18.

apostle Paul declares that God his Father hath "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."*

With regard to the plenitude of his authority within his kingdom, we learn that he subdues all enemies, all rebels against his authority. "These he breaks with a rod of iron and shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel;"†—that he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.‡ He builds his church bestowing and withdrawing spiritual privileges as he sees fit, visiting his people with chastisements, or sending to them ease and temporal prosperity acording to his pleasure.§ He saves his people, for he is *the* SAVIOUR, and makes them kings and priests to God, and seats them with himself on his throne, as he is set down with his Father on his throne. He is the sole judge of the world: for, "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" and hath given him authority to execute judgment also because he is the Son of man;‖ he searches the heart and, as a king, he will sit in judgment, and give to every one according to his deeds. And all the honour and glory of conducting this mediatorial kingdom is given to Jesus. "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that, at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, of beings on earth, and

* Eph. i. 20—23. † Ps. ii. 9. ‡ I. Cor. xv. 25. § See Rev. ii. and iii. passim. ‖ John. v. 22. 23. 27.

of beings under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."* To him the church ascribes glory and dominion, for ever and ever, because he loved his people and washed them from their sins in his blood. And every creature in heaven and in earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea are represented as associating him in the same hymn of praise with Jehovah;—" saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."†

From all these intimations, and much more that might be adduced to the same effect, it is obvious, that, the sole government of this world, and every department of creation connected with it, has been committed to the Son of God, who is also the Son of man, to govern it as his peculiar kingdom, and conduct all its affairs to one great and glorious result. This kingdom of the Redeemer is usually called his mediatorial kingdom, or that kingdom which he administers as the only mediator between God and man.

2. This mediatorial kingdom of the Saviour is, in some points of view, inferior to God's general government of the universe.

It is for example inferior in regard to duration. The Sovereignty of God is from everlasting to everlasting; but Christ's mediatorial kingdom had a beginning. It commenced with the history of man. And it is also, at least in some respects, to have an end. Thus it is said 1 Cor. xv. 24. " Then cometh the end" (that is after the resurrection) " when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he

* Phil. ii. 9, 11. † Rev. i, 5. 6, and v. 13.

shall have put down all rule and all authority and power; for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.—And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." To reconcile this with what is said in other passages respecting the eternity of Christ's kingdom, a distinction is probably to be made. In his mediatorial kingdom, as at present exercised, all things are committed into his hands for bringing his people out from the world, controlling and subduing their enemies, correcting and chastising them when they wander from him, and finally putting down all opposition to him and to them. But these ends being fulfilled, the number of the elect being accomplished, all enemies being subdued, all danger being removed, he will resign that general sovereignty which he at present exercises into the hands of the one living, spiritual, eternal God; but he will continue to reign over his own redeemed and sanctified people, still as the man Christ Jesus, who was dead and is alive again, and still the manifestation of God to them.

Again, the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer, is inferior to the universal kingdom of the Father of all, in extent. The sovereignty of the Deity extends to the whole universe, whereas the mediatorial kingdom of Christ is limited to this world, and to those creatures that are connected with it, or have influence over its affairs. Those good angels that are sent forth to minister to them who are heirs of salvation are under the direction of the Saviour; while Satan and his emissaries are now controlled, and will hereafter be judged and punished by him. How far his mediatorial sovereignty extends into other regions of creation we are not informed. The influence of the Sun and

of the moon on the state of the world doubtless is regulated by him; for all things are upheld by the word of his power, and generally it may be stated that nothing can affect any part of his kingdom, but under his direction.

3. The mediatorial kingdom of Christ is not only, in these points of view, inferior to the universal kingdom or sovereignty of the Deity; but it is subordinate to it. It was established for the purpose of promoting the well-being of God's universal kingdom. It was intended to furnish a peculiar display of the Divine character and attributes. It exhibits on a limited, but intensely brilliant field, the love of God to his moral and immortal creatures, his mode of dealing with them, the principles on which they may expect to be treated by him, the change which any taint of sin occasions in their condition with respect to him, and the impossibility, without a sacrifice and a humiliation on his part, to which he could never be expected to stoop a second time, of recovering them from its consequences. It brings all the attributes of the Deity—his justice, his mercy, his tender love of his creatures, his love of holiness and hatred of all pollution, his condescension, his magnanimity, his wisdom, his power—all the effulgence of his glory, into one concentrated focus, and reflects them back on the universe with inconceivable splendour.

It may be compared in this respect with the Jewish theocracy, as related to the general government of this world. The Jewish commonwealth was limited both in duration and extent, within very narrow bounds, when compared with the whole race of mankind and their history. From Moses, when the law was given, and the Israelites were first erected into a body

politic, till Nebuchadnezzar, when they ceased for ever to be an independent nation, governed wholly by their own laws, the whole period is only about eight hundred years. And even the more extensive periods, from Moses till the second destruction of Jerusalem, or from Abraham till that event, form but a small portion of the probable duration of the world. And in point of extent, the Jewish kingdom bore scarcely an assignable proportion to the rest of the habitable globe. The whole scene of the history of the Israelites, from Egypt to Canaan, occupies but a mere speck on a map or globe of the world.—And the Jewish kingdom was intended to be subservient to the general government of mankind. The Israelites were not selected and installed in all their privileges, for their own sake; but for the sake of all mankind. Their laws and observances and their whole history were intended to be a manifestation of the power and majesty of God, of his care over his people, the principles on which he governs the world, the duties which he requires of men, the manner in which he rewards or punishes them, his treatment of his own and their enemies, exhibited on a limited scale, in a central part of the world, like a picture hung up in the sight of all, for the instruction of all.

Such is the Redeemer's mediatorial kingdom in the great universe. It is limited in its extent, and in some points of view in its duration; but it is, as it were, a small Theocracy, a very Shechinah exhibited for the information and warning and encouragement of the countless myriads of God's rational and moral creation.

And the kingdom of the Redeemer is inferior to the general government of the universe in another point of view. It was established by

him who governs the universe—the eternal, invisible, incomprehensible Jehovah, for the manifestation of his own glory. It was not given to the Mediator, or taken by him, for his glory as Mediator, but for the glory of Him who rules over all. In this respect also it was similar to the Jewish polity. That dispensation was intended to display the glory of God, not merely as the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob—the God of the tribes of Israel; but as the God of the whole human race. So the mediatorial kingdom of Christ was established, not as a separate kingdom by Christ, for his own glory; but by the eternal Father of all for his glory.—And therefore it is again and again declared, that, in all that Jesus did and does in the administration of his kingdom, he acted with the concurrence of the Father, and with a view to his glory. When he took our nature, it was doing the will of his Father. "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will O God.* And again he said, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will" (only) "but the will of him that sent me."† Again, "I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me," (as the whole matter has been arranged in the eternal counsels of heaven,) "I speak these things."‡—There are many other passages of similar import. In short, there is the utmost care taken in Scripture, that the mediatorial kingdom should not be viewed as separate from the general government of the universe, but as connected with it, and forming part of it:—as not established ultimately for the glory of the Mediator; but, through him, for the glory of the God of the universe: and that, in all that Jesus did, he

* Heb. x. 5—9. † John vi. 38. ‡ John viii. 28.

should be represented as acting in concurrence with the Father of all, for the fulfilment of his decrees and the manifestation of his glory.

4. The Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator, and as conducting his mediatorial kingdom, is manifestly to be distinguished, and is distinguished in Scripture, from the Sovereign of the universe. As Mediator, he is inferior to the Sovereign of the universe. He is a servant, (having taken on him the form or condition of a servant,) engaged in a peculiar service, subordinate to the general government of the universe. In his person he was inferior to God: for, when the WORD, who was 'with God,' and who 'was God,' 'was made flesh,' and was 'found in fashion as a man,' he descended to the condition of a created being. That one person, Jesus, the Mediator between God and man, who combined in his person the Divine and human nature, was inferior to the invisible eternal Deity, as unallied to any creature. He was a person formed by the will and wisdom of God, for a particular end connected with his universal government;—he had therefore a beginning,—that is, there was no person uniting in himself the nature of God and man from eternity; and the person so constituted was necessarily inferior to him who, in this sense, created him. And the Lord Jesus, thus constituted, was inferior to the Father of all, not only as to his person, but as to his office.—He was appointed, delegated, sent to the fulfilment of it. He was Mediator between God and man; but not an independent Mediator, nor a Mediator provided by man; but a Mediator provided by the mercy and wisdom and power of God. When Isaac was about to be sacrificed, the Lord arrested the stroke of death, and pro-

vided for himself a lamb for a burnt-offering.— So when man was about to suffer the sentence of the Divine law which he had incurred, the great Sovereign of the universe stayed the execution of the sentence, and provided another victim, even that Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, as a substitute.

5. It is necessary to distinguish those arrangements which fall under the mediatorial kingdom of Christ, and which are made by him as Mediator, from those which are merely connected with it, but which belong to the general government of the universe. For example, the *establishment* of Christ's mediatorial kingdom manifestly does not fall under the administration of that kingdom; but under the administration of the universal kingdom. This is self evident. The establishment of the Jewish polity is not to be regarded as part of the administration of that government; but as belonging to the general government of the world. And so it is with Christ's mediatorial kingdom.

Again, the *duration* of the mediatorial kingdom, and the *conclusion* of it in the sense which has already been explained, do not fall under the administration of that kingdom itself, but under the administration of the universal sovereignty of God. This also is necessary and self evident. The conclusion of the Jewish polity, as well as the commencement of it, is to be regarded not as an act of the administration of that kingdom, but as a measure adopted in the administration of the government of the world.

Yet, again, those *effects* of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ which are to continue after it has been delivered up to the Father, are to be regarded as determined in the eternal counsels

of God. These form the great purposes for which the mediatorial kingdom was established. Thus the number of those who are to be saved by means of it, and the particular individuals who are to be saved, form part of the objects contemplated by the establishment of the mediatorial kingdom itself, and therefore the determining of these points does not fall within the administration of that kingdom. Accordingly, our Blessed Lord speaks of all those who are to be saved by him, as being given to him. "Father," said he, "glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to *as many as thou hast given him.*" "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them *which thou hast given me;* for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world; but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name *those whom thou hast given me*, that they may be one as we are.—While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: *those that thou gavest me* I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled."*

Still further, it would appear, that the selection of individuals to occupy stations of peculiar eminence in Christ's kingdom is also a matter predetermined in the eternal counsels of God.—This is in perfect consistency with the principle, that all effects that are to continue after the mediatorial kingdom has been delivered up to the Father, belong to the universal kingdom of the

* John xvii. 1, 2, 9—12.

Father. For, from the parable of the servants to whom talents, and also of those to whom pounds were entrusted, it would appear that those servants of Christ, who have been eminent in this world, will continue to hold stations of eminence in the world to come. This clearly explains a passage to which our author attaches much importance;—namely, Mat. xx. 23—"To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father." There are several words introduced into this translation of the text, which have nothing corresponding to them in the original. The words rendered literally stand thus—"To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but to whom it is prepared of my Father." The words, *it shall be given to them*, are supplied by the translators of the authorised version, and are therefore printed in italics. The meaning obviously is, that the determining those who are to sit on his right hand and on his left—to occupy the most prominent stations in his kingdom, does not belong to the administration of his kingdom, being already determined in the counsels of eternity; but that he will bestow that dignity upon those who are thus appointed to receive it. Our author in quoting this passage, takes no notice of the interpolation which has been pointed out, although he had read at least one book which states it. Now it must for ever be impossible for those to arrive at the truth, who adhere to errors of so palpable a description as this, when they are pointed out to them. Again, I am constrained to remark, that he who determines to accommodate all evidence to his opinions, instead of accommodating his opinions to evidence, must expect to live in error.

6. I have further to observe, that, although the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer is inferior to the great kingdom of the universe, and subordinate to it; yet that the administration of it equally required the exercise of Divine attributes. The government exercised by the Lord Jesus implied, as we have seen, making every thing within its range subservient to it, —governing the whole moral visible world, and the whole spiritual world, in so far as it is connected with the history and condition of man. It implies directing the good angels in their services, controlling baffling and ultimately punishing the fallen angels. It implies building up the church, discerning the thoughts and intents of the hearts of all men, raising men from the dead, judging the quick and the dead, and rendering to every man according to his deeds, bringing his redeemed people into the mansions provided for them, and casting the wicked into that lake of fire which is prepared for them. Now, although all these operations are on a limited scale when compared with the universe; yet they, equally with the government of the universe, require the attributes of Deity to conduct them. The government of the Israelites—the administering of the Old Testament dispensation—the conducting of that people from Egypt to Canaan, the effecting of all those wonders that were done in the wilderness, although confined to a mere point, when compared with the globe of the world, and among a people whose numbers were trivial when compared with the myriads of the world's inhabitants; yet as much required the exercise of divine attributes, as the government of the world does. And no one who believes the Mosaic narrative imagines that the miracles which he records could have been performed by any power inferior to

that of God. So the Mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer, although limited, in its extent, to a mere point of space, and, in its duration, to a moment of time, when brought into comparison with even what is known of the universe, and with eternity; yet as much required the attributes of the Deity to conduct the administration of it, as the universal kingdom of the Father of all. The same attributes are necessary to create a fly, as to create a universe; and, if Jesus had not been vested with divine attributes, he would not have been fitted to govern his Mediatorial kingdom, comparatively limited as it is, or to conduct all its affairs to their destined and glorious consummation.

Besides, in the conducting of that kingdom, Jesus places himself before his people as God, draws their attention towards himself, requires them to trust in him, to love him, to obey him, as their sovereign lord and king, and to call upon him for help in every time of need. And this would have been demanding of them idolatry, if he were not vested with an inherent right to their worship and love and obedience. He indeed tells them of God his Father, from whom he came, in obedience to whom, and in concurrence with whom, he acted in every thing that he did; yet, it is not by directing them to believe and love and serve his God and Father as separate from himself, that he connects his kingdom with the universal kingdom of the Father. He did not act, as all the inspired servants of God, in all ages of the world acted. They directed the attention of men away from themselves to God, as to a totally different being. They demanded no honours to be paid to them, on the principle, that whosoever honoured them, honoured God. On

the contrary, they declined honour when it was offered to them, lest it should interfere with the honour that was due to God or to the Redeemer. When indeed the Church became corrupt, another language on this point began to be used; and the Pope and clergy of the church of Rome, began to demand every imaginable honour and obedience to be paid to them, under the pretence that, by honouring the church, men would be honouring Christ; and from this very principle grew that horrible tyranny that was exercised over the minds and bodies and property of men. But it was not so from the beginning. No such language is to be heard from the lips of the apostles. While they humbled themselves that Jesus might be exalted; Jesus himself connected his kingdom with God's universal kingdom by setting forth his personal connection with the Father. He acted upon that very principle, (because he was entitled to do so), which was afterwards, presumptuously and without warrant, adopted by the hierarchy of Rome, and which, thus feloniously assumed by them, was the source of so many abominations;—namely to inculcate, that, when his disciples honoured him, they honoured the Father; when they came to him, they came to the Father; when they saw him they saw the Father; when they loved him, they loved the Father; and when they obeyed him, they obeyed the Father. So that unless Jesus be the true God in his own person—the manifestation of God to the world, and especially to the church, he, like the Hierarchy of Rome, intercepts the glory and honour that is due to God, and concentrates all honour and obedience upon himself.

In truth, although the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer must be regarded as inferior to

the general kingdom of the universe, and subordinate to its interests; it is, nevertheless, we have reason to believe, incomparably the most glorious and important department of that universal kingdom. It is a subordinate government of peculiar sanctity,—a display of the perfections of the Deity of peculiar excellency and importance. It is to the universe what the theocracy of Israel was to the world. That little commonwealth, limited as it was in extent and duration, was the very temple of the world; where the worship of Jehovah was conducted according to his will; where his character was peculiarly displayed; and towards which the eyes of all mankind, if they had felt any desire to know the true God, would naturally have been turned.—So the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer is the holy city, the temple, the very sanctuary of the universe. It embodies in one glorious manifestation all truth necessary to be known respecting the moral attributes of the supreme Sovereign and Father of all. It elevates conspicuously in the sight of the universe the Divine law, that eternal standard of right and wrong—its requirements, and its sanctions. It exhibits the Deity as supporting the claims of that law by the weight of his authority, the terrors of his power, the promises of his favour, and the influence of his example. It brings into beautiful combination his strict unbending rectitude in his public capacity as a Sovereign, engaged by his own character to maintain the law of the universe; and his tenderness and compassion in his private capacity, as the Father of his rational and moral family. It includes in it an exposure of the hideous nature of sin, its polluting, degrading, destroying effects, its contagious and contaminating influence. It shows how low

even the God of heaven could stoop, to save his seduced and ruined children from the horror of their condition, to win them back to his bosom, and to restore them to the original purity and loveliness of their character. It displays the wretchedness and the fatal consequences of being separated for ever from the Father of mercy and love; and the blessedness—the cheerful praises, the willing obedience, the never fading joy of the holy and beloved members of his family.—And it lays open all the wisdom, the mingled tenderness, and severity of his dealings with his people, to reclaim them from their sins, to purify their hearts, to lead them in the narrow path of righteousness, to prevent them from wandering out of the way, to restore them when they may have been led astray, to stimulate and encourage them till he has brought them in safety to the abodes of peace and security which he has prepared for them. The mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer thus furnishes manifestations of the Deity of a peculiar character, which can be found in no other department of his universal dominion. It is a temple reared to the honour of the Most High God, constructed of the most precious materials; and, enlightened with the glory of the Lord and of the Lamb, it will form a very Shechinah of glory, the radiance of which will penetrate to the remotest regions of the universe. And towards that sacred spot will all the holy creatures of God turn to contemplate there the Divine perfections. Angels desire to look into those operations which are connected with the constructing of it. And there the redeemed people of the Lord, raised by his grace to be 'a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people,' will 'serve the Lord day and night in his temple, as 'kings

and priests unto God, and thus will they be seated with Jesus on his throne even as he is seated with the Father on his throne.* O the breadth and length, and depth and height of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge!—Surely eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, which he has revealed to us as through a glass darkly, and given us to know in part by his holy Spirit.

Let us now consider those passages of Scripture which speak of the Saviour as inferior to God, in connexion with these views of the mediatorial kingdom, and of the Saviour as Mediator. One of these, on which our author comments, we have in 1 Cor. xv. 24—28. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Our author's comment runs thus.

"Can the subordination and subjection of Christ, in his highest state of future glorified existence, be expressed in terms more strong and distinct? It would almost seem that the apostle had some inspired anticipation of the attempts that would be

* 1 Peter ii. 9. Rev. vi. 15. i. 6. iii. 21.

made, in a future corrupt state of the church, to identify the Son with the Father; and that he had taken particular pains to express the supreme dominion of God alone, in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of their succeeding for a moment.—"The head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God."—1 Cor. xi. 3."*

The only explanation which this requires, after the explanations that have already been given is, that by *God* we are to understand, not the Father, as distinguished from the Word and the Spirit, but the eternal incomprehensible God, as the Sovereign and Father of the universe, as distinguished from the Son as Mediator, and Sovereign of his mediatorial kingdom. The words in verse 24th—"When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father," would be rendered more agreeably to the original thus—"When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to him who is God and Father."—Now what is to be inferred from this passage, after all that our author so confidently advances, but that, when the mediatorial kingdom is completed, and the purposes of it fulfilled, it shall be delivered up to the Sovereign of the universe, and shall, as it were, merge into the general government of the universe, that God—the one invisible eternal God, may be all in all, and his universal empire all in all. Then there shall be no particular kingdom committed into the hands of the Son, and administered wholly by him.—As the temporary theocracy of the Israelites, having fulfilled its object, merged, at the coming of the Lord Jesus, into the general government of the world, the Gospel being then offered on a footing of perfect equality to all: so the media-

* Page 29, or Ed. 2d, page 39.

torial kingdom of the Redeemer, when all adverse rule and authority are put down, the momentary stain of sin is purged from the face of the universe, and the purposes of that dispensation are thus completed, shall merge into the universal kingdom;—the redeemed people of God shall require no other law than the common law, if I may so speak, of the empire, and no other Sovereign than the invisible God. "At that day," says Jesus, (probably referring to the close of his mediatorial work,) "I do not say that I will pray to the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God."*

Yet it would appear that Jesus will still continue to dwell in his human nature among his redeemed people. His soul is by its nature immortal, his body has become so since his resurrection, and still united to God, he will be the manifestation of God to his people, feeding them as his flock, and leading them to living fountains of waters. But he shall no longer control and govern all things so as to render them subservient to the building of his church; and he will dwell among his saints, as he did among his apostles, rather to fill them with delight by his presence, and to lead them by his example, than to rule over them as their king. And in that condescending station, as the man Christ Jesus, he shall be subject to the Sovereign of all, his whole conduct regulated by the same law with that of his people; and he and they, as one living temple, subservient to the well-being of the universal dominion of the Father of all. This is a sense of the passage in perfect harmony with

* John xvi. 26, 27.

the Divine nature of the Redeemer; and every expression in it, according to this sense, derives light and glory from that doctrine.

But, according to the Unitarian doctrine that the Son is a mere creature, perhaps a mere man, this passage manifestly implies that there is one creature in the universe, who now reigns as a Sovereign, and who is not subject to God. For it says, 'when all things shall be subdued unto him,' and 'when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, then shall the Son also be subject to him who put all things under him.' It thus looks forward to a future day when the Son is to be *subjected* (for so the word literally is) to God, implying that now he is not subjected to him. This is intelligible, and appears conformable to other declarations of Scripture where we are informed that he is God united to human nature, and in that capacity, vested with absolute authority within the bounds of his own kingdom—that the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to him; but it is inconceivable on the supposition of Christ's being a mere creature. Nor can the passage be interpreted to signify that, as the Son is now in subjection to the Father, so when he reaches his highest glory, he will still be subject to him.—For he has even now reached his highest dignity. Even now he is seated with the Father on his throne, and is already set at the right hand of God 'in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.' Even now all things are put under his feet.* But the

* Rev. iii. 21. Eph. i. 20—22.

passage refers to his resigning the kingdom, when its end shall have been accomplished in the subjugation and destruction of all enemies; and tells us that, when the Son has resigned his kingdom, he shall retire, as it were, to the rank of a subject, and thus be subjected to him who delegated to him the administration of his kingdom, that God may then be all in all. This passage, therefore, cannot be explained on Unitarian principles, without diverting it from its obvious and proper meaning. The text appended to the comment on that which we have been considering, namely—"The head of Christ is God," requires no explanation. The Christ, or Messiah, derived all his dignity and glory and authority from his being a manifestation of the Deity.

Another passage of a similar description is Phil. ii. 9—11. "Wherefore," (i. e. because he humbled himself as described) "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that, at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, of beings on earth, and of beings under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Our author's comment is—

"Again, it is stated of Christ, Phil. ii. 8, 9, that, in consequence of his obedience, "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name." How can this be predicated of the omnipotent? To whom is he who rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth obedient? To what, or by whom can the eternal one be exalted? Away with the most anti-Scriptural, most unhallowed imagination! "Thine, O Jehovah, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the

majesty, for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah, and thou art exalted as head above all."—1 Chron. xxix. 11."*

Pity it is that our author should have wasted so much indignation on a doctrine which no one entertains. Who ever imagined that God—the creator and governor of the universe, could be obedient to any one else, or could be exalted to any higher station? The passage plainly refers to the mediatorial person and work of Christ; and the doctrine is, that, in consequence of the manifestation which he, by that work, and the administration of his limited and temporary kingdom, gives of the glory of God, he should, still as the man Christ Jesus, be highly exalted, even to the wonder and gratitude and adoration, not merely of the subjects of his mediatorial kingdom—his own redeemed people, but of the whole universe; and that, in honouring and worshipping him, the whole universe would be honouring and worshipping the Father. And the fulfilment of this declaration we have represented to us in the glorious vision of John, recorded in Rev. v. where the whole creation is assembled to worship and glorify him that sitteth on the throne and the Lamb that was slain.

But, on Unitarian principles, how can such passages as these be reconciled to the great practical principles and precepts of Scripture, and to the uniform tenor of its doctrine? How could any creature thus deserve to be placed at the head of the universe—exhibited to the admiration and worship of all the intelligent offspring of God, and all heaven made to ring with

* Page 23, Ed. 2d.

his praise, because he had humbled himself to become a servant, and to be made in the likeness of men, subjecting himself to the contingencies of human nature, and submitting even to death? How can such glory be given to a mere creature, without teaching the universe idolatry? How could such a dispensation as the Gospel be thus made subservient to the elevation of a creature to so giddy a height, without encroaching on the prerogative of the Deity, and contradicting the testimony of God respecting himself that he is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another? If Jesus were a mere man, wherein lay the distinction between his voluntary humiliation and sufferings, and the voluntary humiliation and sufferings of Paul; that Jesus should, on account of his humiliation, be exhibited as an object of faith and love and obedience to the church in all ages, and of admiration and worship to the whole universe; while no elevation over other men, no glory, no love, no admiration or worship should be allotted to Paul, as the reward of his disinterestedness?

The other passages to which our author refers in his general objections to the Divinity of the Redeemer are these.

John vi. 57—"I live by the Father." In these words, "he denies," says our author, "independent and underived existence." To which he adds a reference to John v. 26—"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."—In these passages the Son denies an existence unconnected with the Father—an existence which does not flow from the Father. This

might be true even with regard to his Divine nature; but it is manifest that he refers to his mediatorial person, which he derived from the power and wisdom of the Sovereign Lord of all. He came forth from the Father, and came into the world, as the Shechinah did, to be a manifestation of God to the world; and he has life in himself, as a source of life to others, even as the Father hath life in himself.

John v. 19, "Verily verily I say unto you, the Son CAN do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." "He denies," says our author, quoting these words, "that he is inherently and underivably possessed of any power whatsoever; and he does this with a solemn repeated asseveration." He adds a reference to verse 30—"I can of mine own self do nothing." He ought in justice to have added from verse 19—"What things soever he" (the Father) "doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." And also from verse 21—"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." These latter passages would have provided an antidote to the poison of the inferences drawn from the former passages. The words still refer to Christ's mediatorial person and character. As Mediator he acts, as we have seen, in a subordinate capacity to the supreme God and his universal government, and does nothing independently of God; while yet, in his mediatorial kingdom, he exercises the power and authority of God.

Mark xiii. 32—"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." This is the only passage of Scripture in which

I now find any difficulty. Our author of course presses it with all his eloquence, and recurs to it again and again. "He," (i. e. Jesus) "affirms," says he, (page 13,*) "that he is not omniscient," quoting this passage. Again, he says, (page 42*)—"Our Lord himself declared, as we have already seen, that he knew not when the day of judgment would arrive; and this single declaration furnishes an unanswerable argument, which every suckling in the knowledge of Divine truth may wield to the utter confusion of all the sophistry that would invest the Saviour with omniscience." Again, in page 16,* he says, alluding to explanations of this passage given by Trinitarians, "What he" (Jesus) "was ignorant of as man, he knew as God. Or agreeably to a more novel hypothesis, he acted in a double capacity, a private and a public; and knew and could perform many things in the one, which in the other he had to declare were beyond his knowledge and power! Wherefore do Protestants who hold such inventions blame the Jesuits?" In his first edition, the importance of this text swells so much on his imagination, that he declares boldly, that he would deem it more worthy of credit, as being a declaration of Jesus himself, than any declaration of Jeremiah or of John, even though they had explicitly affirmed what he denies.† This daring insinuation however, he has, as we have already observed, suppressed in his second edition.

I have acknowledged that this passage involves in it peculiar difficulty. Grant to me, however, that latitude of interpretation which our author exercises, and all difficulty would vanish in a moment. I should then have a

* Second edition. † Page 30.

choice of interpretations. I might in the *first* place bring forward a similar expression used by the God of Israel. Hosea viii. 4—"They have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and *I knew it not.*" Before the author speak so exultingly about Jesuits, &c. let him give an explanation of this passage. I apprehend he will find himself under the necessity of adopting that very principle which he treats with so much contempt; namely, that, although God knew well that the Israelites had set up princes, yet he did not know it officially, he was not informed of or made acquainted with it, and therefore speaks of himself as ignorant of it.—Were I to adopt the principles of Unitarian criticism, I should press this passage as a full and satisfactory solution of the difficulty, which does not leave a 'shred of argument' to the objection. But in the *second* place I might propose a different translation, and, for *knoweth*, read *maketh known:* and for this I might plead Hebrew idiom, and the example of Paul, who said, I *knew* nothing among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified: meaning that he *made known* to them nothing else.—Or I might plead for its being understood as intimating that Jesus had nothing to do with the time appointed for the judging of the world—that it did not fall within the province of his mediatorial government to determine that day. In this sense he declares he will say to those who would address him as Lord, but who do not keep his commandments—"I *know* you not, I never *knew* you," that is, I have nothing to do with you, and never had. Or in the *third* place, I might dispute the reading, and for this plead the testimony of St. Ambrose, who lived prior to the age of any manuscripts now extant, and

who asserts that the words *neither the Son* did not occur in the copies of Mark with which he was acquainted; and adds, that these words were foisted into some copies by the Arians; and I might further plead that, in a fragment of Mark, edited by Dobrowski at Prague, these words do not occur; all of which circumstances, I might observe, show that there is at least some dislocation in the text; and this I might further confirm by remarking that St. Matthew in quoting our Lord's language on this very occasion, has not the words *neither the Son.* I might therefore plead that if the words are not to be rejected, a very slight alteration 'in two little words' would bring this passage into perfect conformity with every other intimation of Scripture respecting the Saviour, and propose to read "knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, BUT the Son and the Father." And I might remark that the sentence has a much finer rotundity by this reading, and that it is more in the style of Scripture to say *the Son and the Father*, than to say, *not the Son but the Father.** Or *finally*, I might boldly set the authority of Matthew against that of Mark, and plead that, as Matthew was an apostle, and a personal attendant on our Lord, while Mark was not an apostle, and is generally understood to have written his Gospel on the report of St. Peter, Matthew ought to be believed rather than Mark. In short, there is no one argument by which our author has attempted to divert any passage of Scripture from its obvious and proper meaning, which might not be employed in explaining away this very text on which he builds so much.

* See our author's criticism on Rom. ix. 5. page 27, Ed. 2d.

But God forbid that I should handle the word of God thus presumptuously. The passage stands in all manuscripts now extant, it is rendered in our version according to the ordinary use of the language, Mark was directed by the Spirit of God as well as Matthew, and the two Evangelists do not contradict one another, and therefore we must receive the text as it stands.

Shall I then, following again the example of Unitarian critics, on the authority of this one passage, as it were, read backward the whole of Scripture, and endeavour to extract a sense from its plainest and simplest declarations which they will not yield without torture, nay, and which all the ingenuity of critical torture has failed to elicit? Shall I, because Jesus said on one occasion, 'of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father,' infer, contrary to the evidence of my senses, that Jesus is not called God nor Jehovah, that the attributes and works of God are not ascribed to him, and that Divine worship is not paid to him? Again I say, God forbid that I should act thus presumptuously with the word of the living God!

What then? I adhere to the principle which I laid down in an early chapter of this work.—I believe both sides of the apparent contradiction, and wait for more light to enable me to reconcile them. I believe that there is some sense in which Jesus does not or did not know of that day and hour of which he spoke, and yet that in another sense he is God and Jehovah, vested with the attributes of Deity, and of course omniscient. Does any one ask me how I can reconcile these apparent contradictions? I tell

him honestly, that I have not yet seen them reconciled in a manner satisfactory to my own mind. But to reject or explain away the plain obvious meaning of other passages of Scripture, because I know not on what principles they are to be reconciled to this, and that too respecting so high and incomprehensible a subject as the nature of the Deity, would seem to me to be putting out my eyes because some little cloud intercepts my view in one particular direction; plunging into darkness in search of light; measuring the word of God by the standard of my erring judgment; and exalting my own reason, with all its imperfections, above the infallible dictates of inspiration.

Suffer me for a moment to suppose that subsequent discoveries of manuscripts not yet brought to light, should prove the words *neither the Son* to be what Ambrose asserts they are, an interpolation; and how awful would prove the error of having altered or modified the meaning of other passages of Scripture on the sole authority of this text. Such a supposition ought obviously to have no weight whatever in inducing us to reject, or even to suspend our judgment respecting the authenticity of the text itself, which a prodigious preponderance of evidence entitles to be regarded as a genuine part of Scripture. But it should put us on our guard against wielding this, or any other text, to cut and mangle other plain intimations in the word of God. Many a man has encouraged himself in infidelity by expressions in some copies of Scripture, which subsequent investigations have proved to be of no higher importance than the error of a copyist, or the mistake of a printer's boy.

Another passage is Mat. xix. 16, 17—"And behold one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." Our author, alluding to this passage, says, "He" (Jesus) "refuses to be called good, in the sense of infinitely benevolent." This is as very a straw as any drowning man ever caught at. Where is there a syllable about 'infinitely benevolent?' A strange attribute to ascribe to the Deity. 'Infinitely well wishing!' Or where is there a refusal of the epithet *good* in any sense. So far as the mere question put by our Lord is concerned, it might imply, either that our Lord was good and therefore God; or that he was not good and therefore not God.—Accordingly it has been used by some as an instance of Christ's insinuating that he was God. And certainly there is incomparably stronger reason for understanding him in this sense, than in the opposite. For Jesus is called the Holy one of God, the Holy one and the just, and it would be very extraordinary, if after all that is said of his goodness, he should decline such an address as "Good Master." Surely it is much more in accordance with every thing that we learn of the holiness of Jesus to suppose him to say, "Why callest thou me good? Do you know that I am good, although there is none good but God;" than to suppose him to say, "Why callest thou me good? I am not good, and do not deserve to be called Good Master." The probability however is, that there has been a slight variation of the reading, as a preponderance of authorities gives the passage instead of, "Why callest thou me good?" "Why

speakest thou to me concerning good?" This is another example of our author's making evidence bend to his opinions; for he could not but know that Griesbach has decided in favour of the alteration from the common reading.

Our author goes on to observe, adducing passages of Scripture in proof of the truth of his observations, which it is unnecessary to transcribe, as we do not dispute them, that Jesus ascribes his mission and works to his Father, and that he acknowledges that his power to execute judgment is bestowed on him by his Father. Jesus does not merely acknowledge, but states and asserts this, as an essential part of his doctrine. Does any one find difficulty in conceiving that Jesus should be called the servant of the Lord, sent forth by him; while yet he himself is God in his own nature. Let such a one remember that the Shechinah, or glorious symbol of the Divine presence, which appeared to Moses in the bush, is called an angel of the Lord,* sent forth from God, as Jesus came out from the Father, to manifest him to the world, and that too at the very moment when a voice came from it saying, "I am the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. I AM THAT I AM—Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel I AM hath sent me unto you."† Surely then he need not wonder that Jesus should be called a servant or messenger of the Lord, sent forth from his presence, while yet he is God over all blessed for ever. Further, our author observes, that Jesus affirms, that his doctrine did not originate with himself, that he did not come of himself, that he came not to do his own will, or to

* Acts vii. 30. † Exod. iii. 4, 6, 14.

seek his own glory. All of which amounts to this, that his whole doctrine respecting God and himself and mankind, originated in the counsels of God, and was sanctioned or confirmed by God whom he manifested; that his will was not his own merely, but also the will of the Father, and that the whole end and purpose of all his Mediatorial work was the advancement of the glory of Jehovah. Further, "Jesus," says he, "is not himself the ultimate end and object of our faith." Our faith in Christ is faith in God, because it is faith in the invisible God, from whom he came forth, and whom he represented. We look not to the man Christ Jesus; but to God as manifested in the man Christ Jesus; for it is in Christ that God is reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to men their trespasses.

There are yet two passages of Scripture which deserve separate attention. One is John xiv. 28—"If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I." In another passage, an apostle says that Jesus thought it not robbery to be equal with God; in this Jesus says, my Father is greater than I. Now how are these apparent contradictions to be reconciled? Shall we pronounce either of the passages unworthy of credit? Shall we deliberately attempt, by constrained and unnatural criticism, to force a meaning on either of them which it will not bear. This is the method adopted by Unitarians. They would make one of the passages give way to the other; and of course permit that to retain its authority and its proper meaning which best suited their own views. But we cannot take such liberties with the word of God. We must rather believe both sides of the apparent contra-

diction, and reconcile them afterwards as we best can; or confess our inability to reconcile them. We must believe that there is a sense in which Jesus is equal with God, because the Scripture says so; and a sense also in which his Father is greater than he, for the same reason—the Scripture says so. But these statements do not in fact present any insuperable difficulty.—On the one hand Jesus is equal with the Father, in his original nature, as the Word who was with God, and who was God: and he was equal with God in the honour and worship that are paid to him. And, on the other hand, the Word became inferior to the Father, when he was made flesh, and took on him the form of a servant.—As Mediator his person originated in time, and was formed by the power of God; and his kingdom and his office were subordinate to the kingdom of the Sovereign Lord of all creation. In this view, our Blessed Lord, even if we suppose him to refer to his highest glory as Mediator, and not to his lowly condition of suffering humanity, was inferior to the Father.

But let us look at this extraordinary declaration a little more narrowly. Jesus, apparently a poor man, who had wrought miracles indeed, but who, according to our author's hypothesis, had never pretended to any higher station than that of a prophet; and who was never once suspected of possessing any higher character, declares to his disciples, with the utmost solemnity, on the eve of his death, and for the purpose of consoling them in the view of that event, that his Father—the great God of heaven and earth, who rules among the inhabitants of this world, and in the most remote regions of the universe, is greater than he. What would rea-

son and common sense infer from such a declaration from any poor and humble man, any mere man, "I am not so great as Almighty God," but that he must be insane? But such a declaration from Jesus, when his glory was just about to open upon his disciples by his resurrection from the dead, was manifestly intended to convey to their minds some infinitely more exalted idea than his outward condition indicated, of his nature and his rank. I confess that it appears to me, that such an extraordinary declaration, made in such circumstances, bears all the appearance of having been made for the very purpose of leading the disciples to bring him into comparison with the God of their fathers—that Jesus availed bimself of the inferiority of his mediatorial person and character to the supreme God, to compare himself with God in a manner that was least likely to shock them, and thus to prepare them for the reception of the truth which was about to be unfolded – namely, that, although he was in one sense inferior to the Father, and in subjection to him, yet that, in another sense, he was indeed God manifest in the flesh.

The remaining passage of Scripture to which I alluded as demanding attention, is John x. 33—36, "The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods? If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blas-

phemest; because I said, I am the Son of God." This passage, I confess, was at one time, to me the most difficult in the whole Scripture, and held out the strongest temptation to doubt the Divine nature of the Redeemer. Jesus was charged with making or representing himself as God: and he repelled the charge by showing that, in the Old Testament Scripture, the word *God*, or rather *gods*, was employed in an inferior sense, to designate magistrates or rulers —persons to whom the word of God was sent. Now it appeared to me that this explanation, given by our Lord, would have been uncandid, if he, at the same time, claimed the title God in a superior sense; and as I could not imagine the Saviour to incur any such charge as want of candour, I might, but for the mercy of God, have been tempted, on the authority of this passage, to embark in the ruinous enterprise of endeavouring to lower and explain away the multitude of passages in which Jesus is held forth as God manifest in the flesh. I thank God that he prevented me from listening to the pride of my own understanding; for I have since obtained such views of this text, and of the rest of Scripture, as have removed all difficulty from my own mind on the subject. Even if this text should be regarded as modifying the application of the title God to the Saviour, it determines nothing positive respecting him, but merely deprives us of one argument in support of his Divinity. It could not modify the application of the proper name Jehovah to him, nor the ascription to him of the attributes, works, and worship of the Deity. But this text does not modify the application of the title God, or the Son of God, to the Lord Jesus. My error was in viewing the text as an explanation, whereas it

was a mere legal defence, used, with perfect fairness by our Lord, to arrest the Jews in their purpose of stoning him. Our Lord at this time treated the Jews, as he was accustomed to treat those who came to him in a cavilling, perverse spirit. He did not give them explanations, but he confounded and silenced them. It was thus that he treated the Pharisees, when they accused him of casting out devils, by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. By whom, said he, do your children cast them out,—they shall be your judges. It was thus that he treated those who asked him, for the purpose of ensnaring him, by what authority he acted. He asked them, in reply, whether the authority of John the Baptist was of heaven or of men, knowing that they could not answer him, and thus placed them in the very dilemma in which they intended to place him. It was thus that he treated those who attempted to entrap him by insidious questions. He asked them of the Messiah, whose son he was, and, if the Son of David, how David could call him Lord; and left them in the perplexity in which that question involved them.—So when the Jews were making a malignant use of his calling himself the Son of God, to stone him for blasphemy, as he had made himself God; he cites a passage from the book of Psalms as his defence. He shows them an instance, in which those to whom the word of God came are called Gods, and infers therefore that they had no right to charge him with blasphemy, even if he had called himself a god in that inferior sense, and much less when he said only, 'I am the Son of God.' His answer was manifestly an argument *ad hominem;* which, like every such argument, was intended rather to silence than inform: and it is not to be understood as,

in any degree, limiting or modifying the sense in which he was entitled to the appellation *God.* After using such an argument he might, without any disingenuity, have explained in private to his disciples,—that although he had used this passage of the Old Testament as a legal defence against persecutors, who would only have been the more enraged, if he had told them the whole truth; yet that he was entitled to the appellation *God,* in a much higher sense than that in which it was applied to judges and rulers to whom the word of God came. Whether he gave any such explanation we are not informed;—probably he did not, as the time was not yet come for disclosing the glories of his nature and character, even to his disciples. He had then many things to say which even they could not yet bear, and which he left to be revealed by his Spirit. And if it be true that his apostles, after his resurrection from the dead, spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the true and proper Deity of the Redeemer was one of these things which the Holy Spirit had it in charge to disclose; for, as we have seen, it is fully and unequivocally declared by them.

Some persons have found greater difficulty in our Lord's praying to God, as connected with his being God in his own nature, than in any particular text of Scripture. It has appeared to them that Christ's praying, under such circumstances, were as though he was praying to himself.

But it is manifest that his praying to the Father—the invisible God, necessarily resulted from his having taken upon him the nature of a creature. In that nature he was a creature—a

man; and it is not to be imagined that he would have set the pernicious example of a man living without prayer, without devotion—an atheist. If therefore it was expedient that he should be made in the likeness of men, it became necessary that he should pray. He was, as a man, under the law in all respects, it became him to fulfil all righteousness, and that he could not have done without prayer.

Again, it was by prayer that Jesus evinced his connexion with heaven. It was by prayer that he connected his acts, while he was in the world, with the general government of the great Creator. When he conducted the government of the Israelites under the form of the Shechinah, he connected that limited Theocracy with the universal empire of the invisible God, by causing his heralds the prophets, to declare that he, the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, was the God who filled heaven and earth with his presence, who created the orbs on high, and brought out their host by number. But when he appeared as a subject, a man under the law, he manifested, by prayer, his connexion with the invisible Deity, whom he represented. It was thus that he showed that in all that he did, he acted in concert with the God of heaven—by his will, and for his glory. But he, in one signal instance, intimated, what no creature could do without the utmost arrogance, that he prayed, not because he needed to do so, but because of the people that stood by, that they might believe that God had sent him.*

Yet again, Jesus came into the world, partly to set an example of perfect holiness to mankind,

* John xi. 42.

in human nature, and accommodated to the condition of men. He was at once a manifestation of the character of God, in a form level to their comprehension, and a pattern of moral excellency as a man. He combined in his own person all those beauties of character, that belong to the great Creator and Governor of the universe, with those peculiar beauties of character that belong to the holiest and loveliest of the creatures.

He displayed all the majesty, the authority, the retiring dignity that was becoming the Deity. Even when he was in the world, living as a poor man in the midst of his disciples, there was a certain elevation of deportment, an air of command, a certain degree of reserve, that effectually repressed any undue familiarity, even in those who enjoyed the nearest and tenderest access to him. We can plainly see that his disciples were, to a certain degree, awed by him; and that, especially when they were conscious of any thing weak or improper in their feelings or conduct, they were afraid to put questions to him. Poor and lowly as he was, he lived among them as a monarch in a state of retirement would live among a few of his subjects;—or rather he appears as a loved, but revered father among his children. Even his benefits were dispensed with the freedom and munificence of one who had all things at his sovereign disposal.

But while the character of Jesus possessed all the moral beauties that belong to the supreme ruler of all; it glowed also with the lowlier graces that become the creature—all the humility, the devotion, the resignation to the will of God, the dependence on his favour for comfort, the submission to his law, the zeal for his glory, that form the beauty and perfection of the character

of a holy creature. Some have confined their attention so exclusively to our Lord's example, as to imagine that it was chiefly for the purpose of setting forth such an example that his life is recorded. The Rev. Dr. Bruce carries this so far as to assert, that Jesus passed through *every stage of human life;* because, without this, 'he could not exhibit a complete and perfect example to men, in every period of their being; nor accommodate his instructions to every circumstance and condition.' It is thus that men draw pictures of what is in the Bible from their own imaginations, instead of looking at their exemplar. Our Lord set no example of old age, nor is there any recorded example of childhood, and very little of youth. He furnishes no example as a husband, or as a father, or as a servant, or as a person engaged in the ordinary and generally necessary avocations of men. He set before us the example of a holy creature indeed; but it was a creature, I may almost say, in the abstract, apart from the specialties and individualities of human life. To have presented himself to the world in these specific relations might have added precision to his example as a creature; but it would have been destructive of the still higher object of his life, the manifestation of the character of Jehovah. Yet it was a beautiful model of the moral perfection of a creature. And thus, by a wonderful exertion of Divine skill, there is made to concentrate upon the Lord Jesus every conceivable moral excellency. He at once exhibits, in a form suited to our understanding, the character of the Deity; and holds up before us a perfect example of that spirit and demeanour which are becoming in us, as his creatures and subjects. Now, with this end in view,

an example of prayer was absolutely necessary to his character;—for a creature without prayer, would have been, not merely an imperfect, but a deformed and distorted model.

CHAP. XIII.

ON THE DEITY AND PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Our attention has hitherto been directed exclusively to the person and dignity of the Lord Jesus, whom we have viewed as a manifestation of the God of the universe—the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in human nature, without attending to any distinction of persons in the Godhead. To understand what the Scripture teaches on that subject, it is necessary, as our next step, to attend to what it reveals respecting the Holy Spirit.

Our author, as we have already observed, in his Unitarian creed, observes profound silence respecting the Holy Spirit. And when we consider how much the Scripture speaks of the Spirit of God—the Holy Spirit, and how much the author seems to dissent from the opinions of some other Unitarians on that subject, we are again warranted in asserting, that the apparent simplicity of his system arises wholly from his omitting a large portion of revealed truth; that it is, therefore, as defective as a system of astronomy, or any other branch of physics, which should take no account of a large proportion of the phenomena which it professed to systematize; and that, although he gives it as the system of Unitarians, it is one on which perhaps not another Unitarian in the world would adopt as his

own. It is scarcely to be conceived that there are many who, in an abstract of their view of Scripture doctrine, would consent to omit all mention of the Holy Spirit.

There is a singular discrepancy between our author's opinion on this subject, and that of the Rev. Dr. Bruce. Our author infers that the Holy Ghost was superior to the Saviour, because any sins against the Saviour might be forgiven, whereas the sin against the Holy Ghost was never to be forgiven.* Dr. Bruce, on the other hand, infers that the Holy Ghost is inferior to the Saviour, because the Saviour said he would send him, and because he who is sent, he conceives, must be inferior to him who sends him. We might reasonably expect that these two Unitarians, (if Dr. Bruce will accept of that designation,) would determine this important point between themselves, before either of them should venture to give to the world the creed of Unitarians.

It is obvious, on a moment's inspection, that neither of these inferences have in them a shadow of validity. With regard to our author's, it would prove that the Holy Spirit is superior to God; because Jesus says, "*all manner* of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."† Now, against whom is sin and blasphemy committed, but against God? Therefore it is a less heinous sin to blaspheme God than to blaspheme the Holy Spirit; and therefore the Holy Spirit is superior to God.— Our author is prepared, we must suppose, to

* Page 14, Ed. 2d, Jesus, he says, "makes it a less heinous offence to speak against himself than against the Holy Spirit, which is a clear acknowledgment of his inferiority."

† Mat. xii. 31.

carry out his principle, and to infer, that, because they who reject the Gospel of Jesus are declared to be worthy of much sorer punishment than those who violated the law that came forth directly from God in the wilderness, Jesus is greater than God: and that, because it is said that it shall be more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah than for those who rejected our Saviour's ministry, Jesus was greater than that God against whom the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah sinned, and who executed his vengeance upon them. Perhaps he will say, that those who rejected the Saviour enjoyed greater advantages than either the ancient Israelites or the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, and therefore deserve heavier punishment. In this he would be orthodox; and this is precisely the reason why those who blaspheme the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven, while those who blaspheme the Father or the Son may—they enjoy greater advantages, they sin against clearer light; they not only reject a written law and proclamation of mercy addressed to the outward eye and ear; but they despise a practical evidence of the power of God, actually manifested in the conversion of sinners, and perhaps even an inward experience of the work of God in striving with their corruptions and drawing them to the Saviour. They thus reject the *last* evidence that can be granted, the *last* means that are provided for their recovery, and therefore they must perish. It is only a superiority, or greater maturity of operation that is to be inferred from the difference that is made between the sin against the Holy Ghost and any sin against the Son of God, and not a superiority of nature or authority.

With regard to Dr. Bruce's inference, it is

equally invalid. It does not necessarily follow, that one sent is inferior to him who sends him. An inferior may sometimes send a superior. A servant undertakes a business which he cannot accomplish, and he sends his master to complete it. In a government composed of ministers who are on a footing of perfect equality, it argues no inferiority that any one is sent to attend to what falls within his own department. The minister for foreign affairs finds something of a domestic nature that requires attention, and, without arrogating any superiority, he sends the home minister to attend to it. Let no one imagine that I here intend to compare the Godhead to such a government. If any one do so, he will misunderstand me: all that I intend is to show the fallacy of the principle, that he who sends any one must necessarily be the superior of the person whom he sends. Jesus having accomplished his part in the great work of saving sinners, returned to his Father, and having procured the gift of the Holy Ghost to be bestowed on mankind, he sends him forth to complete his part of the same great beneficent operation.

Dr. Bruce's opinion respecting the Holy Ghost is, at least for the present day, somewhat extraordinary. He imagines that the expression *Holy Ghost* or *Holy Spirit* is to be taken in two different acceptations;—the one as a name of the supreme God, the Father of all, or some energy or mode of his operation; the other as the name of a creature, inferior to the Lord Jesus; and who was promised and sent forth by him after his ascension, particularly on the day of Pentecost. A summary of his views, in his own language, is as follows.

"It must be confessed, that the usual meaning of the Holy Ghost or Spirit, and of the Spirit of the

Lord, and other synonymous appellations, both in the Old and New Testaments, is, the Divine influence exerted in a particular manner, and for special purposes; but, in some texts, it will hardly bear this construction. The Holy Spirit seems to be described by our Lord, as a separate being, distinct from the Father; as a person sent by Christ after his ascension, and not having been with them before; not speaking of himself, but only what he heard, and receiving powers that belonged to Jesus, and were derived through him from the Almighty.

"This account appears inconsistent with his being, either an integral part of the Divine essence, or merely an exertion of Divine wisdom. It agrees better with the supposition of his being a separate intelligence, in subservience to Christ, occupied in forwarding the work of Salvation, after his departure. Perhaps this difference may be best accommodated by admitting, that the phrase has each of these meanings, in different parts of Scripture; and that this Divine influence has sometimes been communicated by a spiritual agent."*

This respectable author is evidently groping his way in the dark as to this subject, for his language is full of uncertainty and hesitation.—He is quite in error in supposing that the reason why writers in defence of what is usually denominated the Trinity pay less attention to prove the Deity of the Holy Spirit than of the Son, is, that if they are not able to establish the Deity of the Son, they know it would be in vain to contend for the Deity of the Holy Spirit. The reason of their not dwelling much on the Deity of the Holy Spirit is, that it is not usually disputed. When Dr. Bruce published his sermons, we were quite astonished that any one in the nineteenth century held the opinion, that, by the

* Bruce's Sermons on the Study of the Bible, &c. page 119.

Holy Spirit, is not at all times meant, in some sense, the supreme God. Writers on this subject, therefore, directed their chief efforts to prove, not the Deity of the Holy Spirit, but (that which Dr. Bruce concedes), his distinct personality. Dr. Drummond, on the other hand, although he does not, so far as I have observed, express himself definitely on the subject, seems, from his inferring that Jesus is inferior to the Holy Spirit, together with his making no distinction in the acceptation in which that title is to be understood, to believe, that by the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is always meant the one supreme God.

In the present state of the public mind, therefore, it may be expedient, in the *first* place, briefly to show that the Holy Spirit who descended on the apostles at the day of Pentecost, is the same being who was revealed under that name or others synonymous from the beginning; and that he is in some view, the eternal God: and, in the *second* place, that he is a distinct person from God the Father and the Son.

Our *first* topic is, that the Holy Ghost is God. The first annunciation that we have of the Spirit of God, is in the first sentence of the Bible. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth: and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." From that first annunciation of him we can trace his operations throughout the whole of Scripture. Job tells us, that God, by his Spirit, garnished the heavens; and that the Spirit of God made him.* The Spirit

* Job xxxvi. 13. xxxiii. 4.

of God was the author of prophecy. The Spirit of the Lord rested on the seventy elders and they prophesied. Moses said, "Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.*" The Spirit of the Lord came upon Balaam, upon Saul, upon the messengers of Saul, and upon David and they prophesied.† "Holy men of old," the apostle Peter tells us, "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The Holy Spirit was the author of sanctification and comfort. "I," said Jehovah by the prophet Ezekiel, "will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."‡— "Cast me not away from thy presence," says the psalmist, "and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit."§

The Holy Spirit was the author of those signal powers and qualifications, by which many of the Old Testament saints were distinguished.— The persons who were employed in constructing the tabernacle, and all the sacred vestments and utensils connected with it, were qualified for their various works by the Holy Spirit.‖— The Spirit of God instructed and supported the elders of Israel who were appointed to assist Moses in the administration of justice to the people.¶ Joshua was qualified to govern Israel by the Spirit of the Lord.** The Spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel, and he judged and made war: and also upon Gideon and Jephthah and Sampson and David: impelling, instruct-

* Num. xi. 25, 29. † Num. xxiv. 2. 1 Sam. x. 10. xix 20. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. ‡ Ezek. xxxvi 27. xi. 19—20. § Ps. li. 11, 12. ‖ Exod. xxxi. 1—5. ¶ Num. xi. 16, 17. ** Num. xxvii. 18. Deut. xxxiv. 9.

ing, and enabling them to accomplish all the wonderful achievements that are recorded of them. These are but a mere specimen of what is said of the Holy Spirit's operations under the Old Testament dispensation. The bare enumeration of all the passages in which he is mentioned would occupy a very large space.

In the same strain the revelation of the Holy Spirit is continued in the New Testament. It was He who formed the Saviour's body in the womb of the virgin.* The soul of Jesus was endowed with all holy graces and gifts by the Holy Spirit. It was foretold by the prophet Isaiah that "the Spirit of the Lord" was to "rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord."† When he was about to enter upon his public ministry, at his baptism, the Holy Ghost descended like a dove, and lighted upon him; and when he commenced his public instructions, he quoted another passage from the prophecies of Isaiah applying it to himself—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor."‡ God gave not the Spirit by measure to him. He wrought miracles by the Spirit of God. "If I," said he, "cast out devils by the Spirit of God." "Through the eternal Spirit," he offered himself without spot to God; and through the power of the Spirit of God he rose from the dead.§

The Spirit also was with the apostles, to comfort them, to teach them all things, and to bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said to them, to support and inspire

* Mat. i. 18—20. † Is. xi. 2. ‡ Luke iv. 18.
§ Heb. ix. 14. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

them in answering their persecutors; for it was not they who spoke, but the Spirit of God who was in them.

Just as it was under the Old dispensation, so it continued under the New; the Holy Spirit was the author of prophecy. Agabus prophesied, saying, "Thus saith the Spirit." Paul also prophesied, saying, "The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter days some shall depart from the faith": and John was in the Spirit when he saw the prophetical visions described in the Apocalypse. And, as under the Old Testament, men were endowed by the Spirit of God with useful gifts, so it was under the New Testament. As Bezaleel and Aholiab were qualified by the Spirit of God for constructing the tabernacle with all its utensils of service; so the apostles and early disciples were endowed with various gifts to qualify them for building the spiritual temple of the Lord. It was He who communicated the gift of tongues at the day of Pentecost. "To one was given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues." And thus there were "set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues;"—all the work of the self-same Spirit who divided to every man severally as he chose.* It is by the Spirit that Christians are born again and sanctified. They

* See 1 Cor. xii. throughout.

that are saved are saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.—They are led by the Spirit, and walk according to the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit in them is, 'love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' The Spirit of God helpeth the infirmities of the saints, and makes intercession for them; and it is by the Spirit of God that our mortal bodies are to be quickened.*

Thus, from the very commencement of Scripture to its conclusion, there is an incessant revelation of the operations of the Spirit of God.

And a moment's reflection might, I think, convince any person, that the distinction made by Dr. Bruce, between that Holy Spirit whose coming was promised by the Redeemer, and who descended on the apostles at the day of Pentecost, and that Spirit of God or Holy Spirit who is spoken of in the Old Testament, is altogether groundless. The same names are given to him which were given from the beginning—the Spirit, the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost, and the Spirit of God. The same operations are ascribed to him under the New as under the Old Testament. He was still the author of comfort and joy, still the inspirer of prophecy, still the bestower of extraordinary gifts, still the agent in regenerating and purifying the heart.—And, as to any imaginary difference that may be founded on his being sent from heaven, the very same language is used of the Spirit of God revealed in the Old Testament. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit," says the psalmist, "and they are created."† "Thus saith the Lord," by the

* See Rom. viii. and Gal. v. † Psalm civ. 30.

prophet Isaiah, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed."* How perfectly is the Holy Ghost, spoken of in the New Testament, identified with that Spirit of the Lord who inspired the ancient prophets, by the declaration of the apostle Peter, that "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It is impossible to distinguish between that Spirit of God who is revealed in the Old Testament, who formed our Lord's body in the womb, who descended upon him at his baptism, by whom he cast out devils, and by whom he was raised from the dead; and that Holy Ghost whom he promised to the disciples as a comforter, who descended upon them at the day of Pentecost, enabling them to speak with tongues, and filling their hearts with peace and comfort: or to distinguish between the Holy Ghost who descended on the day of Pentecost, and that Holy Spirit spoken of by the apostle Paul as the bestower of all miraculous gifts, who dwelt in the early disciples a spirit of wisdom and understanding, the author of sanctification, by whom Christians are led, and by whom they too are to be raised from the dead. There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. This will be further confirmed, when I observe further, that

It must also be evident that this one Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost must, in some sense, be the supreme God. The works that are ascribed to him evince him to be God: for it is utterly inconceivable that any power short of the power of God, should accomplish these works. Accordingly he is explicitly called God. Peter said to

* Isa. xliv. 3. Joel ii. 28.

Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost—thou hast not lied to men; but unto God.* Again, 1 Cor. iii. 16—"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you."—Who should dwell in the temple of God, but God himself? Accordingly, a few paragraphs afterwards in the same epistle, the apostle says—"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you." And again, (2 Cor. vi. 16.)—"Ye are the temple of the living God."

The attributes also and the works of God are ascribed to the Spirit of God. He is the *eternal* Spirit.† He is *omnipresent.* "Whither," says the Psalmist, "shall I go from thy Spirit?"—He is *omniscient.* Thus 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11—"The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of a man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." In this remarkable passage, the Spirit is represented as holding a place in the Deity, that may, in some respect, be compared to the place which the spirit of a man holds in the man; and even the deep impenetrable things of God are represented as known to him. And so the prophet Isaiah says (ch. xl. 13)—"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him." He is *omnipotent*; for he was the agent or power by which our Lord and his apostles wrought miracles.—"For I will not dare to speak," says the apostle Paul, "of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty

* Acts v. 3, 4. † Heb. ix. 14.

signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God."* He is *good.* "Thy Spirit is good,"—says the Psalmist, Ps. cxliii. 10. We have already seen that works peculiar to Deity are ascribed to him. Sometimes we find the very same operations ascribed to the Father and the Son and the Spirit. Thus God—the Father of all, created all things, The Son created all things that are in heaven and on earth, and the Spirit garnished the heavens, made man, and the creatures that are on the face of the earth. The Father raised Christ from the dead, the Son raised himself from the dead, the Spirit raised him from the dead. The Father will raise all men from the dead, The Son is the resurrection and the life, and will raise the dead, and the Spirit, who dwells in the saints, is to raise them from the dead. The Father is the only Saviour, The Son is the Saviour, and the Holy Spirit saves by the washing of regeneration. Accordingly the Spirit is associated with the Father and the Son in the same acts of worship. "The grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all."† And also in the form of baptism, which is a solemn act of worship, "Baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." From all these intimations, respecting the Spirit of the Lord, which are very briefly stated, and which might be easily enlarged to a great extent by a more copious reference to Scripture, it is very evident that he is in some sense, either as a mode of operation, or as a Divine person, the supreme God.

I now, as our *second* proposed topic, adduce

* Rom. xv. 18, 19. † 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

those intimations which indicate that the Holy Spirit is not a mere influence of God, or mode of his operation, but a distinct person.

And on this point I might almost rest satisfied with the words of Dr. Bruce—"The Holy Spirit," says he, "seems to be described by our Lord as a separate being, distinct from the Father; as a person sent by Christ after his ascension, and not having been with them before; not speaking of himself, but only what he heard, and receiving powers that belonged to Jesus, and were derived through him from the Almighty." There is some mixture here of the author's own with the words of sacred writ; yet they will remind the reader of things that are said of the Holy Ghost, which manifestly imply that he is a person. He is indeed uniformly treated in Scripture as a person, by the continual ascription to him of personal qualities and acts. He is represented as having a will, intimating his will, bestowing gifts according to his will, as hearing, knowing, searching, forbidding, &c.—We read of the *mind* of the Spirit, the *power* of the Spirit, the *love* of the Spirit, the name of the Holy Ghost. We learn that he may be *resisted*, *grieved*, *blasphemed*, *tempted* or tried, as God is said to be tempted, by the disobedience or insensibility of those whom he addresses. The following, among many other passages, seem to be decisive of his distinct personality. John xvi. 13——"Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come." Acts xiii. 2, 4. "As they ministered unto the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. So

they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost departed unto Seleucia." xv. 28—"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things." xvi. 6, 7—"Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not." Is it to be supposed that oriental figures of speech should be used in expressing these plain homely transactions and directions? Matthew xii. 31, 32—"Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Here a distinction is made between all other blasphemy, including blasphemy against the Father, as well as against the Son, and the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; and surely, according to our author's own argument from this passage, he cannot but admit that he is represented as a different person from both the Father and the Son.

The reply to all this is, as usual, figurative language—oriental poetry. We are reminded that there are many personifications of inanimate objects in the sacred volume. Thus *wisdom* is personified in Prov. viii. The *Sun* is said to run a race, the *earth* to mourn, the *valleys* to sing. When we observe that the Spirit is said to bear testimony; we are reminded that a pillar or heap of stones is said to bear testi-

mony: When we say that the Spirit is said to speak; we are told that the Scriptures are said to speak; and when we remark that he is represented as exercising his will or choice; we are reminded that it is said, 'the wind bloweth where it listeth.'

This is another specimen of that species of criticism which would reduce the Scripture to a chaos, that every man may be at liberty to select a system of religion out of it, suited to his own taste; and the tendency of which has, I trust, been already sufficiently exposed. What security have we, according to this mode of setting text against text, that God himself the Father of all, or that Christ is a person? There is scarcely a personal act ascribed either to the Redeemer or to the invisible God, to which there might not be found some parallel, in poetical descriptions of inanimate objects. Let any one for example start the hypothesis that Jesus was a mere figurative personage, as Satan is supposed to be,—the one a personification of good, the other of evil, and all of these texts will be equally available to him.

But it is pleaded that the Holy Ghost is sometimes spoken of in a manner in which a person could not properly be spoken of. That he is said to be *shed forth*, *poured out*, to *fall upon men*. It is true the Holy Spirit is sometimes spoken of figuratively, as God and Christ and man are. God is called a tower, a shield, a sun, a rock. Christ is called a vine, a door, a shepherd, a rock, and bread or manna. Man is called a worm, and we are assured by Isaiah that the people is grass. The apostle speaks of *putting on* Christ, of Christ *being formed within* the disciples, of their being *rooted and built up* in Christ. And yet does any one think

of employing these texts to divest God or Christ of their personality.

There is in fact no ambiguity. The rule suggested by Dr. Wardlaw is the rule of common sense, and is perfectly satisfactory. The usual tenor of Scripture in speaking of any being, especially in prose, will always determine whether it is a person or not: and the figurative language will always appear as the exception.—How, for example, are we to determine that the Scripture does not (like the ancient idolatry of Egypt, and the present idolatry of India, with respect to the rivers Nile and Ganges,) teach that the river Jordan was a person; although that river is addressed, as if it were a person in Ps. cxiv., and although the *pride* of Jordan is spoken of by the prophet Zechariah.* Manifestly from this, that in the usual tenor of Scripture language, it is spoken of as an inanimate object. And how are we to determine that the Lord Jesus was really a person, although he is called a vine and a door, and although the apostle speaks of *putting* on Christ, and of being *rooted and built up* in him? For the same reason, that the Scripture usually speaks of him as a person. So we determine that the Holy Ghost is a person; because, although he is sometimes figuratively spoken of, yet in the general tenor of Scripture, he is spoken of as a person, and personal qualifications and acts are ascribed to him.

Thus the doctrine of Scripture respecting the Holy Ghost undoubtedly is, that he is God, bearing the name, invested with the attributes, and doing the works of God: and yet that he has a distinct personality, both from the Father and the Son.

* Zech. xi. 3.

CHAP. XIV.

ON THE TRINITY OF PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD.

We have now come to the limit of explicit revelation, and are entering upon the region of reasoning and inference. We have been hitherto employed in eliciting the facts of Scripture, and ascertaining and proving these facts, in opposition, both to misrepresentations of them, and to objections laid against their existence in the word of God:—we now proceed to deduce an inference from these facts. I admit therefore that we have not the same clear light to conduct us which we have hitherto enjoyed. I admit that a doctrine of inference ought never to be placed on a footing of equality with a doctrine of direct and explicit revelation. It is very obvious that, in so far as our belief of any doctrine is the result of inference, it is not an exercise of faith in the testimony of God, but in the accuracy of our own reasoning. Yet every truth that can be elicited from Scripture, and even every probable conjecture that can be deduced from its facts, are interesting and ought not to be cast contemptuously away. That the Lord Jesus was a manifestation in the flesh to the world of the invisible God, and that the record of his life on earth, which we possess in the

Gospels, is a record of the acts of God in our nature, I hold to be a doctrine of direct, explicit and repeated revelation, of the truth of which I cannot doubt, without doubting the inspiration of the Scriptures. That the Holy Spirit is the supreme invisible God, manifested in his acts, seems to me also to be a doctrine of express and explicit revelation. That the Holy Spirit is a distinct person from the Father and the Son, seems to be removed one step from a direct explicit revelation, by the necessity of previously determining that a being capable of willing choosing, designing, commanding, forbidding, of loving, being displeased or grieved, and other particulars of a similar nature, is to be regarded as a person. That there are three persons in the Godhead is a second remove from explicit direct revelation; because after defining what we mean by a person, and finding that the Father is thus determined to be a person, and also the Son and the Spirit, while yet we believe that there is only one God, we infer from the whole, that there are three persons in one God.

It is exceedingly probable that this statement may not appear satisfactory to many of my orthodox friends, who perhaps may expect that I should follow an example which is too generally given,—of becoming confident in assertion in proportion to my want of evidence. But that I cannot do. I will be as confident as I believe the Scripture warrants me; but I will not consent explicitly to assert what is not explicitly asserted in the word of God.

I therefore proceed to this subject, with the caution and diffidence which becomes a man who feels that he depends partly on his own imperfect powers of intellect to guide him. We have passed the last lamp that has been lighted

up to direct our way. We may proceed a few steps further, aided by the light which shines behind us; but if we attempt to proceed far, we shall, as many others have done, lose ourselves in the thick darkness.

The reader may be surprised when I say, that the chief difficulty which I feel in determining whether, from eternity, there has been a distinction of persons in the Godhead, is to ascertain that there has been such a distinct personality from the beginning, between the Father and the Son. That Jesus, as Mediator between God and man, a person constituted of the Divine and human nature, is a distinct person from the God who sanctified or separated him and sent him into the world, there can be no doubt whatever. But was the Divine nature of the Redeemer from eternity a distinct person from the Father?

It is admitted by the most orthodox theologians, that, by the appellation *Father*, we are frequently to understand, not one person in the Godhead, but the one invisible God, as the Father of his moral offspring. But is the appellation *Father*, as applied to God, ever to be understood in any other sense?

Again, some theologians who believe that there are three persons in the Godhead, conceive that the appellation *Son* is given to the Redeemer, only in his mediatorial person and character. They say that his being begotten is fixed to a certain time,—"This day have I begotten thee."* They conceive therefore that the proper name of that person of the Godhead who took upon him human nature was, not the *Son of God*, but the Word or *Logos*, which became the

* Psalm ii. 7.

Son, by becoming Mediator and assuming our nature. They plead that, by this view of the Sonship of Christ, all the difficulties are avoided which are connected with the idea of an eternal generation, and the objection to an equality of the Word with the Father, arising out of his having only a derived being from the Father;—an objection however on which much more weight has been laid than it can bear. Of this opinion was Ridgley, as expressed in his lectures on the larger catechism of the Westminster Divines. Dr Wardlaw seems to lean to the same view of the Sonship of Christ. His words are—

"While I am thus firmly convinced, that the Scriptures are incapable of any fair and consistent explanation, without the admission of the doctrine of the Trinity, I entertain strong doubts about the correctness of the notion, commonly received, of what is called the *eternal procession*," (rather *generation*, as referring to the Son,) "of the Son from the Father, and of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, *in the essence of Deity*. This, I have long been disposed to think, is entering into the *mode* of the Divine subsistence, farther than the Scriptures authorize us to do. All that we are taught in them, on the subject of *procession*, appears to be,—that, while the three persons have existed from eternity, equal, and mutually independent, in the Divine unity, in a manner which it is vain for us to attempt to comprehend; it has pleased this one Jehovah,—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,—in revealing to mankind the scheme of redeeming mercy, to inform us, that, while each acts his part voluntarily, (the three persons being one in counsel by the same necessity which unites them in essence,) yet the Son is to be considered as sent by the Father, and the Spirit as sent by the Father and the Son:—the Father *representing* the Godhead, in the constitution of the plan, as it has been disclosed to us."

In a note, Doctor Wardlaw adds—"I intended

introduced a separate discourse on the true meaning of the title *Son of God*, as given to Jesus Christ. As difference of opinion, however, exists on this subject, amongst those who agree in holding the essential article of his supreme Divinity, I afterwards relinquished the intention. When my object was to defend a vital doctrine of Christianity against those who *oppose* it, I thought it better to shun any dispute with those who *maintain* it, about the mere import of a name."*

It appears to me that much may be said in support of this view of the Sonship of the Redeemer; although there are also strong objections against it.

But it is manifest that, if it were ascertained that the title *Son of God* is given to Christ, only in virtue of his having become Mediator between God and man, or in virtue of his having assumed our nature, that evidence by which it could be proved, that he was from eternity a distinct person from the Father, is very much curtailed.

But, after deducting the full value of all these considerations, there appears to me to remain sufficient evidence, that, while Jesus Christ was God from eternity, he was also a distinct person from the Father. Were there no other passage in the Bible but the beginning of the Gospel by John, it would, I think, establish that point.—"In the beginning" (that is, before the creation of all things, which is mentioned afterwards,) "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. And the Word was made flesh," &c. I require nothing more than so explicit a declaration to satisfy me, that the Word

* Wardlaw's Discourses, p. 305.

was at once God, and with God; and that the person called the Word was afterwards made flesh, and dwelt among men as the Lord Jesus Christ, who came forth from the Father and came into the world. The words of our Lord himself in prayer, seems almost equally decisive. "O Father glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had *with thee before the world was.*"*

But further, it has been shown that the Holy Spirit is God, and yet is a distinct person from the Father; and, as the distinction between the Father and the Son is placed on the same footing with the distinction between the Father and the Spirit, it seems to follow necessarily, that the Son is a distinct person also. Thus in the form of Baptism—"In the name of the Father; and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost is a distinct person from the Father, and surely it would be very unnatural to interpret *the Son* as only another name for the Father manifest in the flesh. And so the benediction—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost." Here again the Holy Ghost was from eternity a distinct person from the Father, for he is the eternal Spirit through whom Jesus offered himself to God; from which it surely follows that the Son is also distinct.

But still further, a plurality of persons in the Godhead has been intimated from the commencement of revelation, and from time to time, throughout the whole course of it. The Hebrew title *God* is a plural word, not merely in form, but often in construction as applied to God.—Nor is this the only title that is given to God in a plural form. Thus, Eccles. xii. 1—"Remem-

* John xvii. 2.

ber now thy Creator." The word is *creators.*—Is. liv. 5—" Thy maker is thy husband :" —The word is *makers.* Again, Mal. i. 6—" If I be a master" :—*masters.* Prov. ix. 10—" The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy" (*holy ones,* the word being plural) " is understanding."

In reply to this argument our author quotes Rammohun Roy, who says that these plural forms of speech, will by no means answer the Trinitarian's purpose, for they would only " imply a plurality of Gods, without determining whether their number were three or three hundred, without specifying their persons." With regard to a plurality of Gods, that is corrected by the declarations that God is *one ;* and our principles will not permit us to place one part of Scripture against another, and infer that because God is plural he cannot be one, or because he is one he cannot be plural; but we infer from these apparently contradictory intimations, that he is in some sense *one,* and in some sense *more than one.* With regard to these plural forms not specifying the number of persons, we have only to say that we do not pretend to deduce the number three from these expressions. All that we infer is, that, as the words are plural, they must signify more than one.

The author observes that Rammohun Roy, has, from his knowledge of oriental languages, a right to speak with decision. Unitarians make the most of one another's authority. Rammohun Roy knows of course one or more of the languages of India, and therefore he must be versant in ancient Hebrew. Rammohun Roy is familiar with the profane adulatory style of pagan poets, and therefore he must be well acquainted with the style of those men who ' spake as they were

moved by the Holy Ghost.' The truth I believe is, that Rammohun Roy obtained more of his arguments from the writings of Unitarian theologians, to which he could find access in the libraries of certain European clergymen in Calcutta, and who seem to have been at some pains with him, than from his knowledge of Hebrew. The quotation given above is, if we may believe our author in his first edition, borrowed from Dr. Geddes, a Roman Catholic Divine, and we have already found him quoting Dr. Campbell. Rammohun Roy's illustration of this point acertains two important facts; the *first* is, that he is extremely ignorant of Hebrew idiom: the *second* is, that no fair instance of such plural forms of speech can be found in the Hebrew Scriptures; and that therefore, as applied to individuals, they are utterly repugnant to Hebrew idiom. His illustrations are Exod. xxi. 4—"If his masters," (that is the master of a slave,) "have given him a wife;" verse 6—"Then his (the slave's) "masters shall bring him to the judges." Now surely Rammohun Roy does not pretend that the plural word *masters* is here used as an expression of respect, when no particular master is meant. Had he been acquainted with Hebrew idiom, he would have known that a plural word thus used where a singular might be expected, indicates a distributive meaning. The meaning therefore is that *every master* of a slave in such circumstances shall act thus. The same remarks are applicable to the next instance, Exod. xxi. 29—"But if the ox were wont to push, and it has been testified to his *owners*:"—every such ox its own owner. His next illustration is another instance of the plural form of speech used by Jehovah, and is therefore a confirmation of our doctrine. Is. vi.

8—"Whom shall *I* send? And who will go for *us*?" Let Rammohun Roy find any individual man or master, called men or masters; and he will at least hit his mark; but let him not adduce an abstract law about masters, and then tell us that the plural is used as an expression of respect, when no particular master is alluded to. Even the oriental poets are not, I should suppose, so prodigal of their respect, as to lavish it upon abstract titles.

But these plural forms are, in several instances, used by Jehovah himself, in a manner which obliges us to understand them plurally. Gen. i. 26—"And God said let *us* make man after *our* image." We cannot suppose that God would adopt this form of speech without reason, or for the mere sake of lofty language. But if there be any who can suppose God to use the form *we* and *our*, merely for *I* and *me*, let him turn to Gen. iii. 22—"And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as *one of us*." I must maintain that a book which so strenuously resists every approach to idolatry, or to a plurality of Gods, would never have contained such forms of expression, had there not been some sense in which there is a plurality in the one Jehovah.

Agreeably to the various intimations of a plurality of persons in the Deity, the three persons who are each separately treated as God, are frequently brought before us at the same time.—Thus, at the baptism of Jesus, Mat. iii. 16, 17, "And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straight-way out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him: and lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here the Father and the Spirit, each

in his own manner, are found testifying to the Son, on his entrance on his public ministry.—Again, John xiv. 16, 17—"And I will pray the Father and he will give you another comforter—even the Spirit of truth:" verse 26—"The comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name:" xv. 26—"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." In all these passages the three persons are distinguished by personal attributes and acts, they are marked as by the personal pronouns, I, Thou, and He; while yet each of them is spoken of and treated as God—vested with the attributes of God, and doing the works of God. To these passages are to be added the form of baptism, and the Apostolic benediction, formerly alluded to. We conclude therefore that these three are one God.

Our author strongly contends against this inference, on the ground of its being unphilosophical. But, while we would ourselves avoid supplying the want of evidence by confidence of assertion, we must take heed not to permit ourselves to be led astray by the confident assertions of others.

Our author, for example, asserts, without the shadow of a reason, that God is a simple, uncompounded, indivisible Spirit, and compares his unity to a monad or a mathematical point. This is precisely in the style of the ancient philosophers, who pretended to dive into the secrets of nature, who pronounced certain substances to be simple or elementary, out of which all others were formed, and who had all the objects of human knowledge arranged under their proper

heads, so that reasoning might be conducted by syllogisms, from generals, which were determined by the authority of the philosopher, to particulars. Air was pronounced to be a simple uncompounded substance, merely, as it would seem, because it is invisible. Water also was one of their simples, because it is transparent. This all passed for the profundity of their researches; but modern investigation has proved it to have been only the profundity of their ignorance. And such, unquestionably, will every assertion respecting the nature of the Deity prove to be, that is not founded on his own declarations; and he no where says that he is a simple uncompounded, indivisible spirit.

We have no experience of simple beings.—Almost every substance with which we are acquainted has been proved to be compound, or probably is so. We know not if such a mode of existence is possible. We know not if our own souls are simple, uncompounded spirits. Let the author explain to us what he would mean by a complex or compounded spirit, (for if he knows what it is for a spirit to be simple and uncompounded, he must know what it is for it to be compounded,) and we may be able to form some judgment of the meaning of his assertion. But till he do this, he might as well speak to us in an unknown tongue.

Our author further pronounces, that three persons are no more necessary to the constitution of one God, than three souls are to the constitution of one man. Where did he obtain his information? It is not in the Bible? Was it revealed to him? Or has he by searching found out God, has he found out the Almighty to perfection, that he should speak so confidently as to what is,

or what is not, necessary to the *constitution* of the Deity?

He further asserts that the doctrine of a plurality of persons in the Godhead is inconsistent with philosophy. Well, and what then? Is philosophy so certain, so infallible, so unchangeable a thing, that the truth of an intimation in the inspired word of God is to be determined by its *dictum*. Let the author tell us what, and whose philosophy he alludes to. We may thus find that it is contrary to the opinion of Hartley, or Malebranche, or Priestley, or Hume, or Reid, or Stuart, or Brown; and to the weight of their censure we may endeavour to resign ourselves as well as we can; but let him not attempt to frighten us with the terrors of an abstract word.

But we have certain philosophical principles specified, with which the doctrine is inconsistent. It is inconsistent with the simplest axioms of arithmetic—that three is not one, and one is not three. By this use of arithmetic it might be demonstrated that we have two kings. For our one king is formed of two distinct beings, a material body and an immaterial soul, united together in a manner altogether mysterious to us. Further, a king is a being: and two beings cannot be one being, nor one being two beings, *ergo*, we have two kings.—Q. E. D. Again I have to express my hope that no one will accuse me of comparing the different persons of the Godhead, to the human soul and body; for nothing is further from my intention. All that I mean is to show that our author's argument is a mere play upon words.

Another philosophical principle, which is impressed into this service is, that the unity of de-

sign apparent in the universe, proves unity of *cause*, and therefore that there cannot be three persons in the Godhead. But in the first place, our author has forgotten to prove that unity of design; nor can he prove it, in such a manner as to warrant him to found an argument upon it, against even the obscurest intimation of the Bible. We can ascertain unity of design only in that portion of the universe that falls under our observation. Of those remote portions of the universe which lie beyond the sphere of our research, we are totally ignorant; and therefore cannot argue upon them. I believe, *on the testimony of Scripture*, that the same unity of design must extend all over the universe: but, without the Scripture, I am no more capable of arguing upon universal unity of design, than an animalcule shut up in one of the books of the library of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, is capable of reasoning upon the unity of design discernible in the whole of that edfice. And, in the next place, Paley's remark, in spite of all the author's scolding animadversions,* is quite unanswerable;—that unity of design can prove only unity of *counsel*, not unity of *cause;* and for this plain reason that unity of counsel would produce precisely the same effects with unity of cause. If the three persons of the Godhead be perfectly united in *counsel*, then the unity of design discernible in that portion of the universe which falls under our observation, could never prove that there are not three persons in the Godhead. In short, it is quite self-evident, that unity of design, even when established, can never prove any thing further than unity of design;—however that unity of design may have been effected.

* Page 64, Ed. 2d.

Yet again, our author endeavours, but with no better success, to draw another philosophical maxim into this controversy. "It has been laid down," says he, "by one from whom few will have the hardihood to dissent, that, in the investigation of nature, two causes are never to be admitted where one will suffice. If one self-existent, all-powerful being, be a cause adequate to the creationof the universe, it is unnecessary, and unphilosophical to admit two. Therefore God is one," &c.* This is a safe rule 'in the investigation of nature,' when the cause is not known. In such cases we ought not to conjecture more causes than are necessary. But to apply it to cases where the actual cause is known, or can be ascertained, would lead to the grossest absurdities. Two men are charged with murder; who would listen to counsel arguing that one must be innocent, because one was strong enough to effect the crime? We see ten men lifting a weight, which we afterwards find might have been lifted by five men; and therefore, contrary to the evidence of our senses, we must infer by this rule, that only five men were engaged in lifting it. If we had no intimation of different persons in the Godhead, and if all effects could be accounted for by the agency of only one person, then surely, we should not be at liberty to *conjecture* that there are three; but the most obscure intimation from the Deity himself, that, in point of fact, there are three persons in the Godhead, is quite sufficient to set aside a rule which is applicable only to cases of conjecture. Unitarianism therefore, so far from being true to sound philosophy, as our author asserts, only hears the report of philosophical

* Page 65.

principles which she does not understand, and attempts to apply them, where no truly philosophical mind would ever dream of applying them.

Besides, how does our author know that one person in the Godhead is capable of producing all the effects that exist? Is he so thoroughly versant in all effects, natural and moral, as to be able to pronounce what cause is sufficient for their production? He no doubt thinks himself safe in having omnipotence to recur to. But there may be effects which omnipotence itself cannot produce. I would speak with the utmost diffidence, not even as offering a conjecture, but merely as replying by a supposition to what I conceive to be a presumptuous argument, when I ask, what provision does his idea of a simple uncompounded spirit make for the exercise of the moral attributes of the Deity, independently of creatures? For example, it is said that God is love; by which nothing less can be inferred, than that love, in its principle, and in its *exercise*, is essential to the Deity. Now our author's system represents the Deity as dependent on creatures, called out of nothing for the exercise of this affection; whereas the Scripture seems to point to a time when, before the existence of all creatures, the love of the Father was directed to a being who, in the book of Proverbs, is named Wisdom, and who also rejoiced before him.—And the Scripture farther represents all the love of the Father to his creatures, as being an extension of that eternal love, with which he regarded his only begotten Son, to those whom the Son has created and redeemed. Again I say, that I would by no means be understood as asserting that these things are so; but merely, that, for ought our author knows, they may be so; and

therefore, that he would act more wisely in not taking it for granted that all possible effects may be accounted for by the existence of one simple, uncompounded, although omnipotent spirit.

But the chief offence against philosophy which our author charges upon the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead is, that it is mysterious, incomprehensible, &c. To this topic he recurs perpetually; and places it in every imaginable light.* The reply to this is obvious—that, if

* The following passage is quoted by him from 'an able work,' written by the Rev. Dr. W. Robertson. "It is surprising that mankind should suffer themselves to be *mocked*, *abused*, and *insulted*, by certain dealers in hard words, who, when they are driven, by men of spirit ! ! ! out of every other fort, retire to the impregnable one of MYSTERY, where they find themselves secure, and impudently defy all the attacks of human understanding and common sense. Like the philosophers of old, who, when they were puzzled to account for any phenomenon in nature, resolved it easily by the convenient term of OCCULT QUALITY." It is incomparably more surprising that any one able man should write such palpable nonsense, and that another able man should countenance him in doing so. Did Dr. Robertson, or does our author imagine that he can account for any phenomenon of nature, otherwise than by resolving it into an *occult quality*? How does he account for a stone's falling to the ground? He ascribes it to the attraction of gravitation. But what is the attraction of gravitation? A mere name:—and what does he add to his knowledge by giving it a name? Just nothing. The only difference between him and the ancient philosophers is, that they confessed their ignorance, by calling the quality occult or secret, whereas he gives a name to an effect, of the cause of which he is equally ignorant, and then uses the name as if it made him acquainted with the cause.—The superiority of modern to ancient philosophy consists, not in a more accurate knowledge of causes, but in a more extended knowledge of effects. Of causes we are now as ignorant as the Academics, the Peripatetics, or the Stoics. The words of our modern nomenclature, such as gravitation, electricity, voltaism, &c. &c. are names merely of different classes of facts, or at most names of unknown causes, like algebraical signs for unknown quantities. And the utmost that we can intend by ascribing any effect to gravitation or electricity is, that it proceeds from the same cause with certain other effects, that cause being totally unknown. Our author must submit to mysteries.

we reject every thing that we cannot account for, or that involves us in difficulties and contradictions when we attempt to explain it, we must reject as false, almost every operation in nature; for we can account for none. This obvious refutation of the objection Mr. Pope used: and what is our author's reply? "Mr. Pope," says he, "seems not to have considered that there can be any difference between a physical fact, and a theological mystery. I cannot tell how soul and body are united. But that they are united, every creature possessing a rational soul intuitively knows. *How* they are united is another question. The growth of a blade of grass is inexplicable. Most true. That it does grow, however, no one doubts. But what has all this to do with the question under consideration? Prove *the fact*, and it will not be disputed."* This, with all deference to our author, is not meeting, but evading Mr. Pope's argument. The question is not whether the fact is proved or not, but whether its being incomprehensible is to be held a valid reason for rejecting it. Whether the fact be a doctrine of Scripture or a phenomenon of nature, is not of the slightest consequence to this question. We hold that the fact of a Trinity of persons may be proved from the declarations of Scripture; but we admit that we cannot comprehend *how* that fact should exist—that it may, for ought we know, require another sense or faculty to enable us to form any conception of a distinction of persons in the Godhead, and yet of the unity of the Godhead. Our author says its being incomprehensible is a sufficient reason for rejecting it. We reply, that, on that principle, we ought to reject the facts of the union of the soul and body, or of the growth of

* Page 61. Ed. 2.

a blade of grass; although our consciousness or our senses testify to these facts; because we cannot comprehend *how* the soul is united to the body, nor *how* the grass grows. Our author then starts aside, and says, prove the fact and it will not be disputed. We reply, that we have proved the fact from the Scriptures, but that he will not believe it, *because it is incomprehensible;* while yet he will believe the fact that the soul and body are united, although that is equally incomprehensible.

To strengthen this argument, our author gives us a catalogue of the various hypotheses which different individuals have invented to account for the fact of the Trinity, or to explain it. But how easy would it be to match these with the various hypotheses which have been adopted by philosophers, ancient and modern, to account for the phenomena of nature? I need but hint at æons and atoms and monads and crystal spheres and vortexes, &c. &c. &c., to convince the author that I should have no want of materials.

Perhaps, however, a more apt illustration than that which is suggested by Mr. Pope might be found. Let us take the great invisible power of the attraction of gravitation. It is as well an established fact as any in all philosophy, that all matter hitherto known gravitates, or tends to approach other matter, according to a certain law, by a force proportioned to its quantity. Now, what is the cause of this? Sir Isaac Newton distinctly admits, that, to suppose one piece of matter to act on another, without immediate or mediate contact, is not only above reason, but contrary to reason. In a letter to Dr. Bentley he has these words, "That gravity should be innate, inherent and essential to matter, so that one body may act upon another at a distance,

through a vacuum, without the mediation of any thing else, by and through which their action and force may be conveyed from one to another, is to me so great an absurdity, that I believe no man who had, in philosophical matters, a competent faculty of thinking, can ever fall into it. Gravity must be caused by an agent, acting constantly according to certain laws, &c."

Agreeably to this doctrine, he endeavours to form some conception of such an agent; and thus expresses himself upon it in a letter to the Hon. Mr. Boyle.

"1. I suppose that there is diffused through all places an etherial substance, capable of contraction and dilation, strongly elastic, and, in a word, much like air in all respects, but far more subtile.

*"4. When two bodies, moving towards one another, come near together, I suppose the ether between them to grow rarer than before, and the spaces of its graduated rarity to extend farther from the superficies of the two bodies, towards one another: and this by reason of the ether cannot move and play up and down so freely in the strait passage between the bodies, as it would before they came so close together.

"5. Now from the 4th supposition it follows, that, when two bodies, approaching one another, come so near together as to make the ether between them begin to rarify, they will begin to have a reluctance from being brought so near together, and endeavour to recede from one another, which reluctance and endeavour will increase as they come nearer together, because

* I omit part of the hypothesis. Enough is retained to enable the reader to form some idea of it, which is all that is necessary for my purpose.

thereby they cause the adjacent ether to rarify more and more: but, at length, when they come so near together, that the excess of pressure of the external ether which is between them is so great as to overcome the reluctance which the bodies have from being brought together, then will that excess of pressure drive them with violence together, and make them adhere strongly to one another," &c. &c.

All this is further illustrated by a diagram, and by much more explanation to the same effect. This is the theory to which even Sir Isaac Newton, when he conceived himself obliged to give some account of the cause of gravitation, had to resort, for the purpose of avoiding what he felt to be an absurdity, namely, that two bodies could act upon each other from a distance, without some medium of communication. And this theory may well vie with the most ridiculous of those, into which even able men have been betrayed, by a similar imaginary necessity of attempting to explain the distinction of persons in the Godhead.

But I have not yet done with Sir Isaac's theory. From what is quoted from him above, he supposes gravitation to be caused by the pressure of a certain ether, which becoming more rare on those sides of the different approximating bodies which are towards each other, these bodies are pressed upon by the denser ether on the other sides. But no trace of the existence of any such fluid can be found.—The planets seem to pass on their way without being at all impeded by it. La Place in his *Mechaniques Celestes* makes no allowance for any retardation occasioned by it. To this it is answered, that it may be so subtile that it passes through the pores of the planetary globes, as light passes through glass. But then comes another question, namely, if it thus pass through

the pores of the planets, how can it press upon them, or put them in motion? It would be very long before light shining through glass would set it in motion. Other philosophers, perplexed with these vain speculations, and who may be compared to the lazy divines mentioned by our author, resolve the whole into a mystery; and assert, that bodies are drawn together by the immediate impulse of the Deity,—that it is his exclusive prerogative to act independently of any medium.

But let it be observed, that, in the midst of all these conflicting and absurd disputes, no one thinks of rejecting the fact that bodies gravitate towards one another, according to certain laws. No one adduces the futility of Sir Isaac Newton's theory respecting the cause of gravitation, as a reason for casting doubt upon the fact, or law, or principle of gravitation itself. But our author, to be consistent with himself, ought boldly to step forward, and deny the doctrine of gravitation, and give, as his reason, the absurd theories which have been formed respecting it, and that too, even by the great philosopher who discovered it. Till he do so, I must maintain that he attempts to introduce into the investigation of the phenomena of the highest and noblest revelation which the Deity has given of himself—the sacred Scriptures; a rule which he dares not, as he values his character as a man of sense, introduce into the investigation of the phenomena of the elder, but inferior revelation,—the material universe.

CHAP. XV.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF UNITARIANISM ON THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

THE principles upon which those Christians who regard faith as the great means of salvation, are anxiously concerned for the universal dissemination and reception of their own views of the Gospel, are frequently misunderstood and misrepresented. The author of the work on which principally we have been animadverting, expresses himself thus on that subject:

"Will it be believed in an age to come, that there are orators in this our day, who class invincible error with presumptuous transgression; and modestly affirm, that, if after the most painful and sincere investigation of the truth, we have the misfortune to adopt an erroneous belief, i. e. a belief different from that which they advocate, we have nothing to expect but headlong precipitation into the fiery gulf,

> There to converse with everlasting groans
> Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,
> Ages of hopeless end?

Hard fate of involuntary ignorance! Such was not the spirit of him who prayed, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'"

It is surely not unreasonable to ask our author where he found such sentiments expressed. What orator of the present day has used the language here attributed to him? Mr. Pope seems to be referred to; but I believe it would be very difficult to produce any such expressions or sentiments from the writings or orations of that gentleman. Is it philosophical, is it just, is it a dictate of common sense, in any man, to put his own language into the lips of those whose opinions he would impugn? Our author may conceive that such sentiments may be deduced from language that Mr. Pope has used; but I apprehend that no man would feel more indignant than he himself would, if any of his opponents should substitute for his expressed opinions, whatever they conceive might be inferred from them. In very few instances, does our author state the opinions of his opponents *in their own language:* but usually resorts to his own conception of them, or that of some other Unitarian. This of itself furnishes strong presumptive evidence that his cause is indefensible.

We do not believe (I speak confidently for Mr. Pope, and all who entertain similar views of the Gospel, as well as for myself) that a man, who, after the most painful and sincere investigation of truth, has the misfortune to adopt an erroneous belief, is to be condemned to everlasting perdition for his involuntary ignorance.

For, in the *first* place, we do not believe that any such person can remain in ignorance. It is the express promise of God, that "if any man will do" (i. e. is inclined or disposed to do ἐαν τις θελη ποιειν) "the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine of Christ."* Jesus said to those Jews

* John vii. 17.

who believed on him, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" He declares also that the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to lead the disciples to all truth, shall be given to every one who asks his influences.† If any man, therefore, live in ignorance of the truth, it is because he has not sought it, or has not sought with a disposition to do the will of God. It is because he has never availed himself of the offer that is made to him of the gift of the Holy Spirit to ask him of God: for if he had sought, he would have found; if he had asked, he would have received. By these promises and declarations of the Redeemer the matter is brought to this short issue,—whosoever asks receives: if therefore any man has not received, it is because he has not asked, or asked amiss. Shall any one pronounce this judgment to be illiberal, as ascribing to those who are in ignorance, wilful, presumptuous ignorance? My reply is very simple. The illiberality, if there be any, is not mine; I merely judge as the Scripture directs me;—"Let God be true, but every man a liar." When any man, by his conduct or temper, or by his total blindness to the truths of Christianity, makes it evident that he has not obtained the gifts of the Holy Spirit to enlighten and to sanctify him; we are not to charge God with having been unfaithful to his promises, and with falsifying his own declarations; but we are to infer that the man is not disposed to do the will of God, or that he does not continue in the word of Christ, or that he has never asked of God the influences of his Holy Spirit, and thus

* John viii. 31, 32. † Luke xi. 9—13.

has never brought himself within the sphere of the promise.

And, in the *second* place when any are represented in Scripture, as being *destroyed for lack of knowledge*,* we do not believe that they are condemned for their ignorance, except in so far as their ignorance was wilful and presumptuous. We believe that men will be condemned only for their sins. But when they perish for lack of knowledge, it is for lack of that which is necessary to save them from the consequences of their sins. Men are, by the corrupt state of their hearts, and their violations of the law of God, already outcast from his presence, and exposed, like criminals under sentence of death, to the sentence of his law. He has been graciously pleased to provide means, through the mission of his Son into the world, for restoring them to himself, and delivering them from their condemnation; but they who lack knowledge do not possess these means of safety. Wherever the Bible is within their reach, or the substance of it preached to them, they have received the offer of these means, but they have refused to apply them. A man who dies of a disease for which there is an antidote, dies, not by want of the antidote, but by the power of his disease; and the want of the antidote is, only, in a figurative or negative sense, the cause of his death. So a man who is destroyed for lack of knowledge, is destroyed, not by the want of the Gospel, but by his sins; he is not punished for his ignorance of the Gospel, (unless he presumptuously and wilfully put it away from him); but he is punished for his sins; although the Gospel, if he had received it, would have saved him from that punishment.

* Hosea iv. 6.

Let not Unitarians therefore accuse us of want of charity, when we endeavour to persuade them to receive as absolutely necessary to their salvation, what we conceive to be the genuine Gospel. We are only seeking to persuade them to receive a medicine which we believe to be absolutely necessary to their cure. We do not regard them as lying under any more deadly or more disgraceful disease, than that which we attribute to ourselves. The whole difference that we put between our condition and theirs is, that we believe, that, through the grace of God, we have found a remedy of which they are hitherto destitute. We have experienced the efficacy of the remedy. We do not pretend to be perfectly cured by it,—to be perfectly freed from all sin: but we feel that our disease is arrested, that the total paralysis in our nature under which we lay is giving way. We feel that, by coming to the Saviour, our eyes have been opened to the spiritual glories of his revelation; that our ears, which were deaf to his word, have been unstopped, and that we now can hear his voice; that our tongue, which was dumb in his praise, can now, although perhaps with but stammering accents, tell of what the Lord has done for our souls; and that our feet and our hands, which were feeble and motionless in his service, are now capable of some little exertion. We regard these symptoms of recovery as sufficient evidence that we are in possession of the genuine antidote, and look forward with confidence to our perfect restoration. We see all the symptoms of that disease, under the power of which we were perishing, still visible on Unitarians; and therefore we earnestly desire to persuade them, to come to the same physician, and to apply the same remedy which is operating so great a cure

upon ourselves. We tell them that if they do not receive and apply the same remedy, they must perish, not as a punishment for their not agreeing in opinion with us; but as the necessary effect of the moral pestilence with which they, in common with all mankind, have been infected.

It is very probable that Unitarians may not be much better satisfied with these sentiments, than with those which our author ascribes to Mr. Pope: and they may be disposed to think me very presumptuous for supposing that I am in a better state than they. But I cannot help their displeasure. I cannot help feeling that 'whereas I was blind, now I see.' I cannot help believing that they are still blind, when I see them attempting to grope their way as in darkness. It would be no want of charity in Bartimeus, after he had received his own sight, to endeavour to send every blind man he met to the Saviour. Some, perhaps, who had been born blind might not believe that he enjoyed any sense of which they were destitute, and might be very angry with him for imagining that he could discern any thing that they could not equally discern. But he could only regret their unbelief. Nothing that they could say, possibly could persuade him out of his own consciousness, that, whereas he was blind, now he saw.

But I do not conceive that our author has any right to complain of want of charity or liberality in our treating all Unitarians as still blind, and lying under the influence of their original corruption. He himself scruples not to tell us, that the reason why we are not Unitarians is, that we love darkness rather than light; and that the reason why we love darkness rather

than light is, that our deeds are evil.* This is plain dealing, and plain dealing is above all things necessary in treating such a subject. I feel no displeasure whatever with our author for such a statement. If he believed that we loved darkness rather than light; and that our preference for the darkness arose from certain secret sins, which would be exposed by our coming to the light of Unitarianism, it was just and proper that he should warn us to flee from the wrath to come. That must be a spurious liberality which would induce any man to see another perish, without informing him of his danger, and showing him how he might escape. Liberality in fact has nothing to do with the question. We may be liberal of what is our own; but the truth is God's, and with that we have no right to tamper. The only question with us ought to be, not what is liberal or illiberal; but what is true or what is false.

If Unitarianism be not the Gospel itself, but the substitution of something else, it is not to be supposed that it will produce the same practical effects with the genuine Gospel. And that it is not the Gospel, but a spurious philosophy partly drawn from the Scriptures, and partly founded on imagination, a few observations, in addition to what has been already advanced, will I think render abundantly evident.

First. Unitarians do not offer their worship and obedience to the God revealed in the Scripture; but substitute an abstract, philosophical conception of a God, nominally possessing some of the same attributes, yet, in nature and character, altogether different from the God of the Bible. During the existence of the Mosaic dispensation, the only means which the world possessed of

* Page 89 Edit. 2.

becoming well acquainted with the character of the one living and true God, were the manifestations which he gave of it in his dealings with the Israelites. They could indeed have learned his eternal power and Godhead from his works, had they given suitable attention to them; but they could have formed but a very vague and imperfect conception of his moral character—of his character as a sovereign and legislator, any otherwise than by studying it in the government which he exercised over his chosen people. Those ancient philosophers who attempted to form conceptions of the Deity, painted him as some vast indescribable first cause, destitute of every thing that could be called moral character. The conception that Socrates formed of a God went no further than a great, universal, but vague and indeterminate principle or being, who could scarcely be called a person, or be said to be possessed of any character; who took no interest in human affairs, who required no exclusive worship, and who administered no law. But the great God, by condescending personally to administer the government of the Israelites, by giving them a law, and supporting its authority by his power to punish or reward, by determining the penalties to be attached to particular transgressions, by superintending for a time the administration of that law, and giving directions respecting the treatment of particular criminals, has furnished us with the means of forming most distinct conceptions of his character as a legislator and a sovereign, and of the principles on which he conducts the sovereignty of the universe. He has there taught us precisely what is to be understood by his justice, as combined with his mercy; in what circumstances he may be expected to execute

'justice without mercy;' and in what circumstances he may be expected to supersede the claims of justice, and to pardon the offender. We there find a distinct, well defined, personal character, combining in itself all that is admirable and excellent in the character of a sovereign. We see there a sovereignty exercised with an exclusive regard to the well being of the people, without such weakness as would tend to encourage offences, and yet with such tenderness and gentleness as always offered encouragement to the penitent to return and find mercy. We find there a character of the Divine sovereignty essentially different from that which Unitarians usually draw of it. They cannot speak of the wrath or fury of God but with contempt; but the Bible makes no scruple of applying such words to the Deity; and of representing him as ordering, or with his own hand inflicting the most awful executions, when the ends of public justice, or the well being of his people required them. Unitarians would represent the God who is revealed in the Gospel, as a totally different being from the God revealed in the Old Testament. But they cannot surely imagine that the unchangeable God has changed his moral character. That he appears in a light somewhat different under the Gospel, from that in which he appeared under the law, is very true; for the Gospel is a dispensation of mercy to sinners—a scheme for saving those who were lost by being exposed to the sentence of the law—as I shall notice more at length immediately: but those who reject the Gospel, who do not avail themselves of its merciful provisions, may rest assured that they will find the great God to be precisely such a sovereign as he is represented to be under the Mosaic dispensation.

Nor is the dispensation of the Gospel so widely different from that of the Mosaic law as Unitarians would represent it. For, on the one hand, much of the grace and compassion and tenderness of the Gospel appears under the law. The kindness and condescension of God to Abraham, to Moses, to David, and to many others, are not exceeded by any thing that we read of in the New Testament. And, on the other hand, much of the just severity of the law is to be found in the New Testament. We find, even there, men addressed by our Lord himself, as serpents and a generation of vipers, who could not escape the damnation of hell. We find there declarations, that it shall be more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for those who enjoyed, but rejected the Saviour's ministry. We find there the threatening held out that "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries," with express reference to the execution of justice under the Mosaic law, and the inference drawn, that he must be worthy of "much sorer punishment" "who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace."* God, as a sovereign, possesses precisely the same character now that he manifested under the Mosaic law; and the mercy provided in the Gospel is precisely that which was manifested to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and David, and others of his servants under the ancient dispensation.

* Heb x. 26—31.

Under the Christian dispensation, the Lord has been pleased to come still nearer to us than under the Mosaic dispensation. He does not manifest his presence under the form of a devouring fire, or a bright dazzling light, and exhibit his character merely in his public acts as a sovereign. In Jesus Christ he permits us to see, not merely his official, but his personal and, if I may be allowed the expression, his private character. In Jesus he has laid aside his insignia of royalty, the formality of communicating with us by a messenger, and speaking to us, like Joseph to his brethren, by an interpreter. We are permitted, under the Gospel, to enter into the chamber of the King of kings, to see him in the midst of his own family,—to witness his benignity, his humility, his love to his children, his tender and indulgent deportment among them, yet mingled with a certain dignity and reserve, that was just sufficient to excite their deep veneration. Jesus is to us, as if the God who spoke to Moses from the midst of the burning bush, and who, under the appearance of devouring flame, governed the Israelites, had laid aside for a time his awful distance and majesty, had conversed freely with many of the people, relieving their wants, comforting those who mourned, and expressing sorrow for those whom the law necessarily doomed to die. Jesus is to us infinitely more than all this. He is a more perfect, a more glorious *a Shechinah*, a brighter and more spiritual *glory of the Lord;* not only thus conversing familiarly with the people, but becoming as one of themselves, subject to the law, weeping with human eyes over human miseries, stretching out human hands to relieve the wretched, visiting on human feet the home of the widow and the fatherless.

But all Unitarians, reject these manifestations given of the character of the Deity in the life and actions of the Lord Jesus. They cannot conceive of the God of heaven so humbling himself. Yet surely the most surprising act of humiliation was his manifesting himself under the appearance of a flame of fire, and administering, in his own person, the government of the Israelites. Let any man reflect upon the minute space which the globe of the world occupies in the universe, let him then look at a globe of the earth, and observe what a mere speck the country occupied by the Israelites appears upon it, and then let him say, whether it was not a more astonishing condescension in the God of the universe, to officiate as the civil ruler of that people, manifesting himself to them in a bright dazzling light, than it was, merely to change the form under which he manifested himself, and, instead of appearing as a bright splendour, to appear as a human creature. The greatest and most astonishing act of our Lord's condescension was his taking upon himself the form of a servant, to undertake the superintendence of any dispensation on behalf of man. His actually assuming human nature was doubtless a great additional act of condescension: yet the stoop was not so great from being the King of Israel, to the condition of the man Christ Jesus; as the stoop from being the God, not only of the whole earth, but of the whole universe, to the condition of the King of Israel, dwelling, under the form of a bright cloud, in a moveable tabernacle, or in a house made with human hands. Deists have imagined that either of these manifestations of God was too extraordinary to be believed; yet even their philosophy—their mathematical demonstrations, might convince them,

that it could be no greater condescension in the Deity to manifest himself to the most minute animalcules that the mind can conceive of, than to manifest himself to creatures as great as the greatest of the heavenly bodies, or as geat as all of them combined in one. For, if the Deity be infinite, all magnitude bears the same proportion to him—all sinks to equal insignificance. Their argument therefore, if it can be called argument, would prove that it is impossible for the Deity to manifest himself to any of his creatures, under any form; or, what amounts to the same thing, that it is incredible that he should ever have done so:—than which conclusion nothing could be more presumptuous or more irrational.

Yet, by arguments such as these, do, not only Deists, but Unitarians deprive themselves of those precise, well defined conceptions of the legislative and moral character of the great God which the Scripture affords; and prefer their own vague indefinite conceptions of some great *first cause*—some simple, uncompounded, indivisible spirit, vested with certain attributes conceived of in the abstract, but with a moral character, and with principles of government, altogether unsettled and indeterminate. Instead of coming to the God of the Bible, and receiving him as he is revealed there, they select such of the materials provided in the Scriptures as commend themselves to their own philosophy, and out of them fashion a God for themselves. They thus err in regard to the very object of worship and obedience. They do not look to that individual person, possessing a distinct, defined character, acting upon certain principles, who is revealed in the Scriptures, as their God, and the object of their love and obedience; but they look to an abstract philosophical conception

of the Deity, to whom they ascribe precisely such a character as suits that system of religion which they imagine to be most rational.

Secondly. Unitarians, as it appears from the work of our author, are totally 'out of the way,' with regard to the very nature and intent of the mission of the Saviour, and of the whole Gospel dispensation. In the abstract which he has given us of the creed of Unitarians, he has not said one syllable of men being guilty, or in danger, or of any means being provided for saving them from danger. He speaks of *salvation*, and of the *Saviour;* but he does not say from what men are to be saved. He tells us that Unitarians believe that "God placed man on the earth in a state of probation and trial,—endowed him with many noble faculties and powers, of which HE requires the proper use and improvement; that HE is a righteous moral governor, and will reward the virtuous, and punish the wicked." All this is very well for those who are conscious of no sin; for if God be a righteous judge, he will judge according to the law; and those who have not violated the law will be pronounced just, and rewarded. But what provision is there for those who have violated the law, and who are conscious that if they be tried by the law, particularly as explained by our Lord in his sermon on the mount, they must be condemned. I can find nothing in our author's creed on this subject, connected with the Gospel of Christ. His creed says that God is a being of "infinite placability and mercy, who requires no bloody sacrifices," to appease his wrath. But he adds, that the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; and that a broken and contrite heart he will not despise. What is the

meaning of all this? God is infinitely placable, will he then punish no one? That our author cannot suppose, for he says that he will punish the wicked; nay, and he seems to intimate that he requires "a broken and contrite heart" in those who have sinned. What does he mean by a broken spirit, and a broken and contrite heart? If they mean any thing, they must mean a spirit deeply and solemnly affected on account of sin—like the poor publican's, who could not lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, and said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner;" or like that of the woman who was a sinner, who bathed the feet of our Lord with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Is such a broken and contrite heart necessary for all men? If not, what is necessary for those who have sinned? God is infinitely placable; but something is necessary to move him to compassion, else he would not punish the wicked; and is that something, the sacrifices of a broken and contrite heart? If so, I apprehend it would be difficult to find a single individual in our author's whole congregation, or in the whole Unitarian body, who could be saved, on these terms. I never yet met with an individual, who was really humbled on account of sin—deeply and solemnly penitent,—who could be said, without the utmost extravagance of language, to be broken-hearted under a sense of guilt, who yet could remain a Unitarian for a single hour. And the probability is, that, if our author found such a person among his people, he would strongly suspect that he was becoming a fanatic, and perhaps pronounce him to be tinged with insanity.

But let us suppose that our author is permitted to rule it so, that God, in the administration of

his law, is to pardon every penitent sinner, and none else; are we to understand him as teaching, that, however wicked a man may be during the whole of his life, if he be but distressed and broken-hearted on account of his sins when he comes to die, he is, as a matter of course, to be pardoned? This, I suspect, would sound too like an approach to his notions of Calvinism for him to believe. How, indeed, could a law be administered on any such principle, as, that a man, who has, not merely in one instance, violated it, but who, during his whole life, has been employed in perpetrating the very mischief which it is the object of the law to prevent; and who, when he is detected, convicted, condemned, brought to the foot of the gibbet, is terrified, distressed, broken-hearted, should be, as a matter of course, set at liberty? If this be not the Unitarian view of the mode in which God will deal with sinners, what then? Is God determined to resist the tears and cries of those who are really penitent, even at the last hour? And is the weeping, contrite, broken-hearted, imploring sinner to be cast, without mercy, into hell? How, in that case, could God be described as infinitely placable?

Let the author say distinctly what comfort he could offer to a dying sinner, supposing him to have lived a life of sin. A Unitarian minister was, as I have learned, at one time candidate for the Presbyterian chaplainship of Newgate. How would he have conducted himself, had he been called to attend a criminal to the place of execution? Would he have told him plainly that there was no hope for him; or would he have permitted him to suppose that, however wicked he might have been, if he were only sorry for his sin, he would be saved by the mercy of

God? I believe that Unitarian ministers are not very uniform in their practice in such cases. I have heard of one declining to visit a member of his own congregation on his death-bed; and giving as a reason, that it could be of no use, that the man had lived in wickedness, and it was not to be supposed that he could be pardoned, now that he had come to die. I have met with an instance of an opposite description, in which a Unitarian minister was called to visit a young man who had enjoyed, but misused a religious education, and who, when he came to his death-bed, fell into extreme terror on account of his sin, and the account that he was going to render to God. The minister endeavoured to comfort him by telling him, that he should not take such things so seriously to heart, that youth would have its indiscretions, and that God was good, and gracious, and merciful, and would not be rigorous upon him;—or words to that effect. He then, I think, prayed with him, and left him; and, although the young man continued to live in his immediate neighbourhood for many weeks, he never again visited him.

I do not mean to state either of these modes of treating dying sinners as universal among Unitarians. They are indeed contradictory; and he who could adopt the one could scarcely, on principle at least, adopt the other. But I should be glad to know what is their principle on the subject; how, for example, our author, or any other Unitarian minister, would conduct himself as chaplain of a Lock hospital, or of a criminal prison. Whether he would deprive the wretched wanderers of all hope, and tell them plainly, that nothing could then save them from perdition; or whether he would, by giving them encouragement, permit the others to sup-

pose, that, however wicked they might be during their lives, if they were distressed on account of their sin when they came to die, they would be surely pardoned?

These are questions of inconceivable importance. They are not confined to the treatment of criminals or other abandoned persons. They refer to the condition of all who have lived in sin of any description, whether disreputable in the eyes of the world, or not. They may be slighted by those who are whole-hearted on the subject of sin, who feel little or no uneasiness about it; but, when a man approaches his dissolution, and his sins rise up on his recollection, such questions assume an importance which no tongue can express. It is not sufficient to tell a man whose apprehensions are excited on that subject, that God is good and merciful. It furnishes but little consolation to a man who is about to be put on trial for his life, for a crime of which he knows himself to be guilty, that he will be tried by a just and humane judge. The question which he feels to be important is, whether there is any definite ground to hope that the sentence of the law may be set aside. So, when a man who is conscious of guilt, feels that he is going to take his station at the bar of divine judgment, he must know something more to support him than an assurance that his judge is just and compassionate. He must know whether there is any ground, and what ground there is to hope, that the sentence of the law, which is plainly written in the Bible, and which he is conscious that he has incurred, will not be executed upon him.

Our author, by connecting no specific means of saving men from the condemnation due to their guilt with the mission of the Saviour; nay,

by omitting all mention of the guilt of man, proves, to the conviction of any mere infant in divine knowledge, that he has totally mistaken the nature and end of the Gospel dispensation. The Gospel is a restorative dispensation. It views men as in danger, and it comes to save them. It views them as guilty, it comes to proclaim pardon: it views them as defiled, it comes to purify them: it views them as alienated from God, it comes to reconcile them to God. The Messiah was to be called *Jesus*, because he should save his people from their sins. He himself tells us that he came "to seek and to save them that were lost." The apostle Paul says, that "Jesus gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from iniquity, and purify us to himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works;"*—thus intimating, that we were in bondage to iniquity, and were defiled by it. Jesus said that he came to call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. This was addressed to the Pharisees, and he did not by any means intend to concede to them that they were righteous; for, on other occasions, he bears testimony against their wickedness. But he thus intimated to them, that he came for the purpose of saving sinners,—that his business was with sinners, and, therefore, that if they were righteous, they did not fall within the objects of his mission. He said to them also, "the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Here again, he did not intend to teach them that they had no need of a spiritual physician; but merely to intimate, that he came into the world as a physician goes to an hospital—for the sake of those that are sick; and that if they were not

* Titus ii. 14.

sick, he had nothing to do with them, nor they with him.

Accordingly, in describing the effects of the Gospel dispensation on those who believe it and profit by it, the inspired writers always state them as a deliverance from the guilt and consequences of sin *already incurred.* "There is now," says the apostle Paul, "no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."* Again, Eph. ii. 1—6. "And *you* hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein, in time past, ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also *we all* had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Yet again, Rom. iii. 9—10. "What then, are *we* better than *they*" (i. e. we Jews than they Gentiles), "no, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin, as it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one:" ver. 23—26. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare

* Rom. viii. 1.

his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare I say, his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." But to cite all the passages of the New Testament which evince the Gospel to be a restorative dispensation, would be to transcribe a large portion of the whole book.

Yet, not one word of this is said in our author's creed, nor of any thing in the condition of man that required restoration. He says, quoting in part the words of our blessed Lord himself, that, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;" for what purpose?—"to be our instructor," says he, "our example and our guide." But the purpose expressed by our Lord himself is—"that whoso ever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life:" and he proceeds in the same strain to add, "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but *he that believeth not is condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."* And John the Baptist says, as recorded in the same chapter "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but *the wrath of God abideth on him.*"† Nothing can more decisively prove that our author's view of the purpose for which God sent his only begotten Son into the world, is absolutely irreconcileable with our Lord's own view of it, than that he could not make use of our Lord's own words in stating it; but that, after quoting half

* Jo. iii. 16—18. † ib. v. 36.

a sentence, he found himself under the necessity of substituting for the remainder, language of his own.

Our author's total silence respecting the work of the Holy Spirit, in renewing and changing the heart of man, indicates the same mistake as to the very end and nature of the Gospel. A thousand years before our Lord's coming into the world, a psalm was composed to celebrate his ascension to heaven; in which it is said, that, on ascending up on high, he had received gifts for men, yea even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* These words are, by the authority of inspiration, applied to the ascension of Jesus to heaven, and the gift of the Holy Spirit whom he shed forth upon his disciples.† And Jesus himself declared, that the object of his going to heaven was the sending forth of the Holy Spirit, who should more than make up to his disciples the loss of his visible presence among them. "Nevertheless," said he, "I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you."‡ With regard to the importance of the Spirit's influences, the apostle Paul says, that we are "saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."§ And, in perfect conformity with this, Jesus himself tells us, that except a man—that is any man, be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. And it is manifestly in reference to the same operation, that the apostle Paul says again, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any

* Ps. lxviii. 18. † Eph. iv. 8—12.
‡ Jo. xvi. 7. § Tit. iii. 5.

thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature:"* And again, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."† The influences of the Spirit of God therefore, in renewing and sanctifying our nature, form an integral, and an essential part of the Gospel dispensation, in its capacity of a restorative dispensation; and the omission of all mention of them—of the Holy Spirit himself, and of that pollutedness of the heart, to purify which calls for his interposition is, I conceive, another indication, that our author and other Unitarians have totally mistaken the very nature and object of Christianity. He says, indeed, that Jesus came to turn us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God: and, to one uninitiated in the mysteries of Unitarianism, (for it too has its mysteries) these words would seem to imply that all mankind are in darkness, and lying under the power of Satan. But these tenets are strenuously denied by most, if not by all Unitarians. Most of them deny even the existence of such a being as Satan, and imagine that he is only a sort of personification of evil—especially of the malignant passions. Our author gives no explanation of what he conceives to be meant by the language which he quotes; or of what it implies respecting the state of mankind. But, judging of his sentiments from those of the greater part of Unitarians, which he warrants us to do by identifying himself with them all, he understands nothing more by these words than that Jesus came to enlighten men by his instructions, and to teach them how to overcome any bad passions or tempers by which they might be enticed or hurried on to evil. I have no intention whatever of misrepresenting him, and

* Gal vi. 15. † 2 Cor. v. 17.

would much rather that he had explained his own views of the state of mankind, than that he should have obliged us, by his silence, to infer them from other parts of his system, and from the published sentiments of those with whom he identifies himself.

I am constrained, therefore, to conclude, that our author, and those who receive his instructions, as affording just views of Scripture doctrine, are totally astray in their conceptions of the nature of Christianity. They are thinking of a scheme for rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked; but the Gospel commences with declaring that there is *none righteous, no, not one;* and therefore, that there is *none*, independently of the pardoning mercy of the Gospel itself, to be rewarded,—*no, not one.* That God would punish those who violate the law of his empire, and reward those, if there were any, who have uniformly obeyed it, is most true, altogether independently of the coming of Jesus into the world. But the Gospel comes to men as guilty, to save them from the sentence of the law, which they have all, without exception, incurred; it comes to them as corrupt and polluted, to purify them, and fit them for the presence of the Lord in heaven.

Thirdly. There is still another radical error in the Unitarian system, which may be regarded as partly the cause, and partly the effect, of those which we have been considering, and which casts a blighting, withering effect on the whole of their religious character—namely, that they have no adequate conception of the evil of sin, and the danger resulting from it. They are prone to speak of it as an error, a frailty, an infirmity, which God is, in some sense, bound

by his very character, to overlook and pardon; and in this view of sin, our author, both by his own language, and by his quotations, seems to concur. Here, again, we much require definite explanations. Does our author regard the crimes of murder, robbery, incest, or adultery, as mere frailties, or errors, which God will necessarily, in virtue of the infinite placability of his character, pardon and overlook? That ground he will hardly take. Would he, then, regard Sabbath-breaking or blasphemy, cursing and swearing, as such mere errors, peccadillos, as will be passed by without strict scrutiny or severe punishment? This is not the judgment which God himself has pronounced respecting these sins. In the Jewish code of laws, which was framed by God for the very purpose of making us acquainted with his character as a legislator, and in which we have what may surely be regarded as his own estimate of the comparative demerit of crimes, he has annexed the same punishment to blasphemy and Sabbath-breaking, as to murder and adultery; namely, the punishment of death. Nay, and when persons were found guilty of these crimes, and the cases were remitted to him for his determination, he directed that both the Sabbath-breaker and the blasphemer, should be stoned to death, without mercy; which sentence was executed accordingly. So much importance did he attach to the observance of the Sabbath, that the utter ruin of the kingdom of Judah, or its exaltation to the highest prosperity, was made to depend on the nation persevering in their violations of the Sabbath, or repenting of them and relinquishing them.* Even under the Gospel, the

* Jer. xvii. 19—27.

only sin that is declared to be unpardonable, is blasphemy—the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Sin is a transgression of the law of God—the law of the universe, the eternal standard of right and wrong; which God is, by his character, engaged to maintain in all its purity, with all his power to punish or reward. After all that our author and other Unitarians say respecting the frailties and infirmities of man, they will scarcely ascribe the origin of any kind or degree of moral evil to God. God, we are told, made man upright: he made him fallible indeed, but with no propensity or passion that necessarily drew him into a violation of the divine law. The punishment which God annexed to the violation of his law, was death. As if for the very purpose of showing us, that the demerit of sin consists, not in the mischief that may be done by it to society, but simply in the disobedience which it implies to the divine command, he selected as simple a test of obedience as can be conceived—the refraining from eating a certain fruit. Man transgressed that law;—he was immediately expelled from the garden of Eden, subjected to hard labour, and condemned to die. His posterity have inherited the same expulsion from Eden, the same hard labour, and the same sentence of death. But although Adam's act of disobedience may appear a trivial offence to those who do not consider it, yet a little reflection will render it evident that it contained in it the seeds of all sin. It was *ingratitude.* God had, of his free bounty, given to him every thing that could be conducive to his happiness; yet he would not refrain from that one fruit which God had reserved for his own purposes. It was *dishonesty;*—he took what was not his own. It was *breach*

of trust;—he was placed in the garden, to keep and to dress it; and he availed himself of the confidence placed in him, to take what God had told him was to be reserved. It was *rebellion;*—he knowingly put forth his hand to do what God had prohibited. It was *intemperance;*—Eve saw that the tree was good for food and pleasant to the eyes, and she did eat, and gave to her husband also, and he did eat. It was *ambition;*—they imagined that they were to become as gods, knowing good and evil. It was *charging God with falsehood;*—God had said, in the day that thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die. Had Adam believed that declaration, he would as soon have eaten of the most deadly poison as of that fruit. But the serpent said ye shall not surely die, and Adam believed the serpent rather than God, and proved this by the overt act of eating of the fruit. Now, every sin, even that which seems to us most trivial, includes in it all these black ingredients, and sometimes others,—such as cruelty, or disregard of the well-being of our fellow-creatures in addition. And is it reason or common sense that would represent even the slightest taint of such detestable dispositions, as mere frailties or errors; not only deserving of little or no punishment, but forming no just ground of expulsion or exclusion from the Divine presence?

This is not the judgment which men pronounce when their own convenience or honour is concerned. They make no scruple in doing their utmost even to annihilate those who encroach upon the comforts of society. Does our author say, that I am comparing the character of God to that of imperfect fallible man? I ask, does he conceive it to be an imperfection in legislators to annex severe penalties to their laws, and

to execute them? I ask, if he would commend a legislator who should be so infinitely placable—so tender-hearted to criminals, as to pardon them as often as they expressed sorrow, and asked forgiveness? Would he not say that such a person was not fitted to be a legislator; and that his mistaken leniency to transgressors, was cruelty to his obedient subjects? And why regard that as a perfection in the Deity, which would be regarded as a blemish and a fault in any human legislator? He accuses us of ascribing to God such conduct as would horrify us in a mortal like ourselves? In one point of view, this accusation is true. God is the proprietor of the lives of all men, and may do what he pleases with his own. We should view with horror a man putting to death one individual of his fellow-creatures, while we feel no horror in hearing of God sweeping off, by famines and pestilences, whole nations. We should feel horror in any man depriving a single individual of the means of religious instruction; while we feel no horror in God's punishing the backsliding of Churches, by 'removing their candlestick out of its place,' and leaving them in darkness. But, taking into view the whole of the moral empire of God, his character as a legislator is precisely that which we should regard as the perfection of a human legislator. We view him as having enacted a law absolutely perfect, fitted to every conceivable case, affixing no penalty too severe; and therefore, as maintaining the integrity of that law. It may frequently be a virtue in a human Sovereign to depart from the sentence of a human law, because the law itself may be unjust; but no such case can occur in administering the law of God, because his law is absolutely perfect.

But let us look again at the practice of the

most virtuous society. Let me suppose a community living in perfect virtue, upright, kind, generous, pure, peaceful, (to say nothing of devotion); and let me suppose one of them to be detected in a theft;—what a total change is produced in his condition!—his character lost, his friends compelled, by a regard to their own character, to expel him from among them:—he has fallen, and so fallen that he can never rise to what he was; he has brought a stain on himself which can never be wholly obliterated.

There is one case, in which a single fall produces an effect that forcibly illustrates the consequences of sin; namely, a female, in virtuous and polished society, losing her character. What a total, irretrieveable fall! What an instant, and irremediable ruin! Even mercy itself, although it will not injure the wretched victim of guilt; although it may pity, and provide for her even a comfortable subsistence, yet does not receive her into confidence, and place her in her former condition. If such a person be restored to some measure of respect, it is not till after she has given unequivocal proofs of a heart really broken and contrite under a sense of her degradation. If she fall a second time, she is cast off absolutely for ever; and I suppose even our author, notwithstanding his admiration of infinite placability, would scarcely recommend to a husband, or a father, or to brothers and sisters, to receive a female into the bosom of their family, who once and a second time, had given herself up to infamy.

Now, no such fall can appear so degrading and hateful in the eyes of the most virtuous society, as any fall whatever into sin must appear in the sight of God, and of his holy family above. And it is to be expected, that a God of infinite purity

shall, from the mere placability of his character, receive into the bosom of his family, one who has fallen, not once or twice, but who has been living a life which, when tried by the standard of his law, must be pronounced a life of the grossest pollution; and that, too, without any provision for maintaining the standard of moral rectitude, or protecting the other members of his family from the contagion of sin?

The Scripture gives no countenance whatever to that simpering sentimentalism, which would present the Deity as incapable, in consequence of extreme tenderness, of executing the sentence of his own law. It describes sin, of every kind, as hateful beyond all conception. The descriptions given, by the Prophets, of idolatry and its attendant vices, under the figure of conjugal infidelity, are unspeakably revolting.* Even the blessed Jesus, whom some writers would represent as meek and gentle in such sort, as to be incapable of using severity even of language, could address to the Pharisees such words as these—"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Even He tells us of that rich man who, although he was no robber, or murderer, or blasphemer, or adulterer, but who lived for his own gratification, and neglected his duty to others, passed from this world into hell, where he lifted up his eyes in torment, and could not obtain even a drop of water to cool his tongue. It is He who declares, that it will be more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for those who enjoyed, but neglected the advantages of his ministry.

God is, indeed, represented in Scripture, as infinitely merciful and ready to forgive; but it is not by lessening the demerit of sin, nor by

* See Ezek. xvi. & xxiii.

lowering the standard of obedience. He has given us a holy, just, and good law, suited to our nature, which, but for our corrupt propensities, we are fully able perfectly to observe. We have violated it; and God has provided a means of deliverance from its sentence; but he has not, in the slightest degree, abated its requirements. There is no standard of obedience alluded to in the word of God, but his pure and perfect law. To that we are directed to conform ourselves; and every conceivable motive is held out to induce us, to our very utmost ability, to do so. A man who lives in the habitual practice of any known sin, has no ground to expect mercy from God. Unitarians imagine, that the provision made for showing mercy, is an abatement of the standard of the law,—a sort of indulgence to a certain degree of sin, as an unavoidable infirmity. But it is absolute blasphemy to talk of God's indulging men, even in what they might be disposed to regard as the most trivial sin. We might as well speak of a parent being so kind and affectionate as to indulge his children in a propensity to drink poison; or of his lovingly and tenderly indulging them in lying, and stealing, and drunkenness. No, God cannot be indulgent to sin, or to sinners in permitting them to sin. Sin is that which defiles and destroys men; every taint of it is pollution and degradation, and the more God loves his people, the more decided will be his measures for re-restraining them from every approach to such contamination.

Unitarians, then, accuse us of representing God as a tyrant, writing his laws in blood. How can that be, when the very peculiarity of our doctrine is, that he saves us by his free, sovereign, undeserved grace and mercy? They tell us, that we imagine he would not save us till

full satisfaction was made for our sin. Very true; but by whom was the satisfaction made? By himself. They mix up their doctrine with our's, and discover absurdity in the combination. They view the satisfaction made by the Lord Jesus, as made by a creature, and as a 'foreign influence,' supposed to move the great God to mercy; and then they represent us as believing, that he refuses to be satisfied, without shedding of blood. But we believe that it was he himself, the Deity, in the person of the Son, that made the satisfaction in our behalf to the violated law—the great principles of his government. If, in this, he departed from strict justice, it was only in that noble sense in which a man who makes a great sacrifice for the sake of another, is sometimes said to be unjust to himself. Nothing, certainly, but the benignity of his own nature, called upon him for such a sacrifice; and we find in that sacrifice, a standard whereby to measure the love and mercy of our Father in heaven. We do not regard him as showing mercy, by lowering the standard of right and wrong; permitting his children to do with impunity, what he himself has pronounced to be wrong, and indulging them in what he has stigmatised as destructive and degrading to them. But we see him, for the purpose of at once saving them from their guilt and their corruptions, and, at the same time, maintaining the standard of his law, taking the satisfaction of their sins upon himself, descending to their condition, and morally submitting to their deserved punishment. Thus he approves himself just, while yet he justifies the ungodly; thus, he has provided for the pardon of the offender, without lowering the penalties which he himself had annexed to the violation of his law; and thus he can pardon the sins of his

people, without abating one jot, or one tittle of the standard of obedience.

The scheme which Unitarians have devised, according to which, they imagine the Lord is to show mercy to transgressors, is the very worst that can be imagined;—namely, letting down the standard of the law till certain degrees, or certain descriptions of sin shall cease to be included within its denunciations. This system, throws the whole of duty into uncertainty; it weakens all the motives to seek after high attainments in holiness; it sets men upon calculating how little religion will be barely sufficient to keep them out of hell, and it represents God as enacting a law which it would be tyrannical and unjust in him to execute. The Scripture says not one syllable of any abatement whatever in the standard of obedience. On the contrary, our blessed Lord, in his sermon on the mount, of which our author expresses his admiration, and which cannot be too greatly admired, raises the standard so high, that there is not a human being on earth who would not be condemned by it. And yet, without hinting at any abatement or indulgence, he concludes with these formidable words—"Every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."* Does the author consent to be tried by the doctrine of that sermon, simply as it stands? I tell him it would be his utter destruction. He reminds us of the prodigal son, whom, notwithstanding his great delinquency,

* See Matt. v., vi., & vii.

his father freely forgave. Very true; and that free mercy of God is all that we rely upon. But let our author and other Unitarians note, that the prodigal son is represented as returning to the standard of obedience in his father's family. There is nothing intimated of his bringing back with him any of his riotous living, or of his other abominations. Now, the standard of obedience in the family of God, is given by our Lord in his sermon, to which we have alluded. Has our author returned to that standard? Has he left behind him every thing which that sermon determines to be sin? If not, let him consider on what ground he expects the reception of the prodigal son.

The consequence of these fatal mistakes into which Unitarians are betrayed in regard to the *object* of worship and obedience, respecting their own condition, and the nature and end of the Gospel dispensation; and respecting the demerit of sin, and the standard of obedience, must produce corresponding effects on their religious character. The full and able manner in which the late excellent Andrew Fuller, has treated the practical defects of the Unitarian system, in his "Calvinistic and Socinian systems examined and compared, as to their moral tendency," has left little for any subsequent writer to do, besides earnestly recommending that invaluable work to the serious perusal of his readers. Partly, however, for the sake of those who have not seen Mr. Fuller's work, and partly to confirm and apply the principles which we have been endeavouring to establish, I shall make a few brief observations on what I conceive to be the defects of the religious character of Unitarians. It is

not by any means my intention to charge them with gross immorality; or to insinuate, as our author seems to do respecting us, that they are guilty of sins in secret, which, if they were detected, would expose them to disgrace. On the contrary, I conceive them to be a highly respectable part of society, many of them exemplary in the relative duties of life. But, as a body, the withering influence of their system, in intercepting the beams of the Gospel of the grace of God, and leaving them in the coldness and darkness of night, is, I apprehend, sufficiently indicated by their religious character;—and it is to that only, that I would call the attention of my readers. In doing so I utterly disavow any hostile feeling towards them. I would address them as a physician would a patient whom he would persuade to receive his prescriptions, by pointing out to him the symptoms of disease. Still they are but symptoms of that spiritual malady with which I, as well as they, have been affected, and from which I make no pretentions to be perfectly freed. I trust, indeed, that its power is now broken in me; but the vestiges of it are still sufficiently evident to involve me in whatever disgrace may be attached to it. If I place them as prisoners at the bar, I take my station beside them, and claim no other pre-eminence than that, although I am as guilty as they, I have made application for pardon according to the prescribed directions, and have obtained it; whereas they are hoping to escape after braving the trial, by some undefined relaxation of the law, either as to its requirements, or its penalties—a hope which will surely prove delusive.

1. The primary and fundamental sin of human

nature; namely the pride of the human heart, is not broken by the Unitarian system. Their writings uniformly breathe the pride of intellect. They are impatient of mysteries; that is, of whatever they do not understand. They will not approach the Scripture with that veneration with which a genuine inquirer after truth approaches the phenomena of nature;—receiving and treasuring up every fact that is actually ascertained, however apparently extraordinary; abstaining from pronouncing upon what is not actually ascertained; and never permitting inferences drawn from facts, or difficulties in reasoning upon them, or inconsistencies to which they seem to lead, to shake their belief of the facts themselves. But they come to the Scripture as the ancient philosophers did to the contemplation of the universe. These sages, as they were called, would understand every thing. They could tell how the original atoms of matter were combined together to form the world; they could talk fluently about simple and compounded substances; about the purer and finer etherial particles, and the grosser and coarser particles; and, in their own way, they could account for every thing. So, Unitarians approach the Bible as its superior, to pronounce upon what is rational in it, what may be attended to, and what may safely be neglected; what may be received in its obvious meaning, and what must be made, no matter by what critical torture, to speak a different language.

The Rev. Doctor Bruce, to whose representations some of my readers may be disposed to listen, gives a striking picture of the manner in which Unitarians treat the sacred Scriptures. "The doctrine of the pre-existence," says he, "is so clearly and repeatedly declared in various parts of Scripture, that it can hardly be con-

tested without an undue degree of critical refinement. Those who deny it, seem to me to be at continual variance with both revelations; to be continually fencing with the word of God, parrying and warding off the most direct and pointed texts." This is precisely the impression which such writings as that of our author, make upon my mind;—an interminable warfare with Scripture, waged for the purpose of beating down and silencing its testimony;—a constant attempt to confront the sacred writers out from their own lips, or from the expressions of one another. Now, can those who, in such a spirit, approach the sacred word of inspiration, be said to approach it humbly, as enquirers after truth? They assume the tone of persons who have ascertained the truth from some other source, and who, believing the Scripture to have some description of divine authority, come to it to bring it into consistency with their previously determined system, or to borrow from it such assistance in completing their system, as it may afford. No one would ever examine the phenomena of nature, for the purpose of determining what they are, or ought to be, according to the dictates of reason or common sense. No one would now attempt to form a system of astronomy or of chymistry, in conformity with what he conceives, in reason and common sense, it ought to be. Philosophers now content themselves with ascertaining the facts of astronomy and chymistry, without the slightest regard to what may be deemed reasonable or unreasonable; and when the facts are ascertained, they arrange them into a systematic form. But they will not permit the system to alter, or modify, or suppress, or reduce to an unessential, any ascertained fact. The very proposal, therefore, to interpret the

Scriptures, (not by *the aid* of reason and common sense, which is legitimate, but) according to the previous determination of reason and common sense, respecting what ought or ought not to be true, is a decided evidence of a proud unteachable spirit.

In all his works the Deity chooses to be incomprehensible. We cannot prosecute our inquiries in any direction, without being conducted towards unfathomable mysteries, and inextricable labyrinths. The purpose of thus surrounding our limited field of vision with thick darkness, is doubtless to bring down and subdue the pride of our understanding. When Job had expressed himself irreverently and presumptuously respecting the ways of God to him, God overwhelmed and confounded him, by a reference to the unsearchable mysteries of his works. But Unitarians treat all mysteries, even with regard to the being—the 'constitution of the Deity' with contempt ; and, rather than confess Him to be incomprehensible, they attempt to bring Him within the grasp of their intellect, by pronouncing him to be a simple, uncompounded, indivisible Spirit, and by comparing his unity to a monad or a mathematical point.

The pride of morals is, in Unitarians, as unbroken as their pride of intellect. They cannot but confess themselves to be sinners ; yet rather than confess themselves to be justly condemned criminals, and cast themselves on the mere compassion and mercy of their judge, they venture to bring down the standard of his law to their own level, that they may have at least some appearance of merit to commend them to his favour. They cannot but feel that the thoughts and desires and purposes of their hearts —the working of their passions and tempers, are

very far from being pure, according to the standard furnished by the Lord Jesus; yet, rather than acknowledge themselves to be corrupt and unclean, they will indulge the frantic expectation, that a God of spotless purity and holiness will, in the administration of his law, make allowances for what they are pleased to call infirmities and frailties, and accept of them on the ground of their hearts being good and upright. Dr. Bruce argues that human nature cannot be corrupted, because, if it were so, men could not regard one another with respect. How, he asks, could children respect their parents, or husbands and wives esteem one another, if they all believed one another to be the victims of an innate corruption? The same argument would prove any criminal to be innocent; for how, if he were guilty, could his wife or children respect him? The inmates of a lunatic asylum might argue (and many of them would have sufficient acuteness to argue) that it was impossible they could be insane, —for how then could they respect one another?

Yet there is something strange in our author's doctrine regarding the corruption of human nature. He accounts for the slow progress of Unitarianism in the world, upon the principle, that men love darkness rather than light, and that the passions represented by the gods of the Ammonites, Moabites, and Sidonians—Moloch, Mammon, and Belial, Astaroth, Chemosh, and Milcom are arrayed against it among Christians. I cannot conceive of a picture of more deplorable corruption. But the difference between his doctrine and the Scripture doctrine of human depravity is, that, according to his view, only the opponents of Unitarianism are the victims of this corruption. Unitarians themselves inherit another nature, and love the light, and come to the

light, and are animated with the "lofty and holy aspirings of the immortal soul." Thus this very doctrine which is calculated to humble man to the very dust in the sight of his Maker, is converted by them into a foundation for self complacency and "lofty aspirings."

2. Unitarianism fails in exciting in the bosoms of its votaries love to God and zeal for his glory.

Our author speaks indeed, of love to God; but it is manifestly not love to God as a person, but as a principle or theory. He forms a conception of a great first cause or universal spirit endowed with certain attributes, and falls in love with the magnificent imagination. That he does not love the God of the Bible, nor even his own God, as a child loves a parent, is manifest from this, that he is disposed to palliate offences done against him, and to encourage himself and others in the hope, that they will be regarded but as frailties and errors. He further declares very explicitly, that God would be a tyrant if he were to execute his own law, and not make allowances for his frail and erring children. Now all this is a very questionable proof of love, if not a proof of the very reverse. I apprehend that a child would scarcely be said to express much love for a parent, who should manifest a disposition to represent direct acts of disobedience to his parents' commands, as trivial matters, mere errors, which his parent is bound by his character to overlook. An affectionate child is rather disposed to magnify such offences, especially when when they have been committed by himself. And, if he had but refused to lift a pin off the floor when

he was directed to do so, he would feel no rest till he had acknowledged the guilt of his disobedience, and had been reconciled to his parent. An affectionate child would manifest the utmost anxiety to prevent his brothers or sisters from transgressing their father's will, even in the smallest matter, by pointing out to them the wickedness of disobedience. But the love of Unitarians leads them to palliate all offences, and enables them to confess themselves sinners with as little emotion, as if they were confessing that they had inadvertently violated the etiquette of a drawing room. Unitarians avow that they could not love God, if he were not to make allowance for all that they conceive to be unavoidable infirmities; and boldly declare that they would regard him as unjust and tyrannical, if he should punish them, for what they choose to pronounce to be their errors and frailties. This they do even although they may be making no effort to be delivered from these errors and frailties, but may, on the contrary, be justifying themselves in the practice of them; and charging those who are aiming at a more exact obedience with fanaticism and hypocrisy. These are not the fruits of love, for thus saith the Lord Jesus, 'if a man love me, he will keep my commandments.'

But another necessary evidence of love to God, in which Unitarians are wretchedly deficient, is earnest desire, accompanied with active endeavours, to persuade all men to love and obey their Father in heaven. I do not mean to say that Unitarians, and particularly Unitarian writers, have manifested no zeal for the advancement of their own party. They have written and published and circulated, with some activity and liberality, their writings among the members of other Christian communities.

But these cannot be called efforts to convert men to the obedience of God, for they have been directed to influence persons who are at least as exemplary in their obedience as they. Had they been animated by a sincere love to God, they would have directed their attention to those who are living in rebellion against Him. But where do we find Unitarians, to any extent, or with any degree of liberality, conducting any operation for enlightening and converting those who are ignorant of the Gospel, and who are living in the grossest wickedness? Our author tells us, that Mahommedans and Jews will never receive Christianity, till we relinquish our doctrine of the Trinity, which, he says, is the great obstacle to their conversion: and assures us that it is partly for their sakes that he himself relinquishes it. But if, from pure benevolence to Mahommedans and Jews, he modifies his own belief of what is contained in the Scripture, it would appear that his benevolence evaporates there. How much is it to be lamented that those who conceive themselves so well adapted by their belief to accost Jews and Mahommedans do not make the attempt to gain them over to Christianity! But no, Unitarians may speculate and talk of the conversion of unbelievers; but their system paralyses them, and deprives them of all power of exertion.

Our author draws a beautiful picture of 'one who taught the people standing on the shore, from a fisherman's boat: and who, as he sat on the green sward of a mountain's top, beneath the clear blue sky, with the people congregated around him, delivered a discourse, not inferior in beauty, pathos and sound Divinity, to the most elaborate episcopal compositions of modern times'. (Would to God that he and every

Unitarian would deeply consider the contents of that discourse, as they bear on their own condition and prospects!) But how comes it to pass that neither he, nor any other Unitarian ever thinks of following this admired example. There are shores and fishermen's boats as convenient for the purpose in Ireland as in Galilee; our mountains are as green, our sky perhaps as blue, and our people as ignorant. Why then will not Unitarians go to our shores and our mountains, and congregate the people around them, and give them that instruction whch they so much require? How comes it to pass that that the only examples of preaching under similar circumstances, in the present day, are to be found among Trinitarian Missionaries? He challenges us to show him a religion more influential on human conduct and he will adopt it. We accept the challenge, and if he will be satisfied, not with theory, but with fact, we appeal to the superior efficacy of that system which he rejects in calling forth the exertions of men to promote the worship and obedience of the God of heaven among mankind. I leave to him the full benefit of the obvious retort which may suggest itself to his mind from Mat. xxiii. 15. if he be reckless enough of consequences to make use of it.

Our author tells us, that the 'spirit of Unitarianism has been roused from a lethargy, by the continued cannonade of a hundred theological batteries levelled against her.' He must surely admit that she had sunk into most profound repose. And after such an admission, I do conceive that he has no right to ascribe the slow progress which it has made among us to our love of darkness rather than light. Let him ascribe it to its just and acknowledged cause—

the apathy of Unitarians,—the heart-withering tendency of their system. And what evidence is there that it is now aroused, but the publication of the author's own pamphlet, and the anxiety of some of its friends for its circulation? Where is the exhibition of the Unitarian body, in the compassionate spirit of the Gospel, sending a mission to the poor and the ignorant? She can fight, it appears, and, "*in self defence*, is brightening her arms, and sharpening her weapons of war." But she cannot disseminate the Bible, she cannot follow the example of Him who went about, exposed to obloquy and contempt, without party-zeal, without contention or fighting, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to the poor.

3. The measure adopted by Unitarians for the purpose of finding room for the extension of Divine mercy to themselves, namely, lowering the standard of duty, produces its natural effect in preventing them from making great attainments in holiness of life. From the moment that the standard of duty is lowered, men are left destitute of any fixed standard. The Scripture says nothing of any other standard than that of the law of God, as explained by our blessed Lord. They are therefore obliged to imagine some standard for themselves; and, in the absence of every thing else, they betake themselves to the general state of morals and religious practice around them.

Unitarians therefore are found always to give merely such attention to religious observances, as may be usual in the country or city in which they reside. They never as a body, advance beyond the common practice; but, on the contrary, in consequence of the same accommodating prin-

ciple, that the Deity is too good and merciful to require a rigid observance of any standard, they have a perpetual tendency to fall under it. If the common practice is to attend Divine worship twice on the Sabbath, they soon come to one attendance; and, by and by, that is limited to those days only in which neither weather, nor business, nor pleasure interfere with it. If it be usual to maintain family worship, twice a day, they soon come to once a day; as the practice becomes less general, they lead the way in limiting it to once a week, and by and by relinquish it totally. As the common practice sinks, they sink along with it; till, as on the continent of Europe, they can even attend the theatre on the Sabbath. This regular declension from any standard of duty that may be adopted, is usually justified, and even commended, under the strange name of *liberality*.

Do Unitarians say that many Trinitarians fall equally rapidly from the standard of the word of God? They are well aware that many who, by belonging to Established and other Churches in which Trinitarianism is professed, are understood to profess that doctrine, neither know nor believe it, and are not influenced by that or any other religious creed. These are persons who, like Unitarians, follow the fashion of society. And they are equally aware, that there is another and totally different class among Trinitarians, who act under the influence of their religious principles. It is among these therefore, that we are to look for the effects of their doctrine in forming the character. Now nothing is more common among them, than to find persons, upon the sole authority of Scripture, departing from the ordinary practice of society, and adopting a higher standard of religious duty.

But I believe it would be difficult to find a single instance among Unitarians of such elevation above the ordinary practice of persons who are barely decent in attention to religious duty. Could our author, for example produce a single family in his whole congregation in which the worship of God is at present held twice every day? Such a practice I apprehend he would now find to be very rare indeed, although at no very distant period, a Presbyterian who did not worship God in his family morning and evening, would not have been regarded by Presbyterians even as a Christian.

Dr. Priestley admits, that Calvinistic principles are favourable to devotion, that Calvinists have less apparent conformity to the world than Socinians, and that they seem to have more of a real principle of religion than they. He admits that there are many Calvinists, not only whose hearts and lives are, in all respects, truly Christian, *but whose Christian tempers are really promoted by their own system.* He however parries the inference which ought obviously to be drawn from these admissions, by supposing that Calvinists have less, and Socinians more, of a real principle of religion than they seem to have. This is a mode of reasoning by which any conclusion might be drawn from any given premises.

Dr. Bruce also admits that, "those who" (as he imagines) "deny the value of good works, are found habitually to practise them; and are every day detected in indiscriminate acts of charity and mercy. Bigots," says he, "are better than their profession; gloriously belie their principles by their practice; and adopt those sentiments as the rule of their conduct which they deny to be the rule of their faith. As those

who have embraced the purest form of Christianity often fall lamentably and shamefully short of the perfection to which they pretend, so they" (Calvinists) "are better than their profession;" —and much more to the same effect.* Belsham, confirms this account of Unitarianism by saying, that rational Christians are often represented as indifferent to practical religion, and by admitting that there has been some plausible ground for the accusation. †

Is it possible to imagine a more perverted mode of reasoning than the above? Inquirers after truth, possessing even a moderate share of diffidence, when they found that their hypothesis was not confirmed, but confuted by facts, would have been led to doubt at least the truth of the hypothesis. The inference which one might have expected Dr. Bruce to draw from the fact, that the practice of Calvinists gives the lie to the principles which he ascribes to them, is, that he did not understand their principles, and must have been in error respecting them. But diffidence constitutes no part of the Unitarian system. Rather than acknowledge even the possibility of his not understanding Calvinistic principles, of which, indeed, he proves himself to be as ignorant as I suppose him to be of the Chinese language, he represents a whole body of people, acting in opposition to their belief, and to the very motives by which he imagines them to be influenced. Calvinists, with a creed which he conceives to be unfavourable to religion and virtue, are eminent for both; while Arians, with a creed fitted to produce an elevated religious character, are yet lamentably and shamefully deficient in what they pretend to! He might as

* Sermons on the study of the Bible, p. 188.

† Serm. on the importance of truth.

well tell us that he had discovered, that, from the nature of flame, it ought to point downward; although he could not but admit that it was usually to be found pointing upwards; and that earth and stones had a natural tendency to rise to the higher regions of the atmosphere, although, some how or other, they were usually detected at rest, or tumbling downward.

Our author, in one passage, betrays so total an ignorance of the practical tendency of the Gospel, that I cannot help quoting it at length.

"Many who have been disgusted, repelled, and driven to the verge of Deism, by the unscriptural doctrines of some popular systems of belief, will own, with gratitude to God, that they first found out the right way to happiness, to evangelical truth, and the life to come, when they joined Unitarian worship. Then, first, the simple majesty of the religion of Christ won their devotion, and established its dominion in their hearts. Then, for the first time, they saw its celestial beauty revealed, and heard its life imparting dictates spoken. The hour of their regeneration was come. Their darkness was dispelled. The clouds of false doctrine which had obstructed their mental vision rolled away, and left them surrounded with a sudden light from heaven. Then could they contemplate God, not through the spectral gloom of Calvinism, as clothed with vengeance, seated on a burning throne, his face in wrath and sprinkled with blood; but in the pure radiance of Gospel truth, clothed with salvation, seated on a throne of grace, and smiling with infinite benignity, as their friend and father, on all the generations of men. Their souls felt relieved from an oppressive load. They heard freedom proclaimed to the captive. Their chains had dissolved away. Their spirits felt light and buoyant. They were emancipated and redeemed; and they exulted in their deliverance

from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."*

Before we can participate in this, our author's exultation on the conversion of a Deist to Unitarianism, it would be necessary that we should be informed, in plain language, the change which had actually taken place upon him. What did it amount to? He was no slave to Calvinism, and therefore it was not from that system that he was emancipated. What is there in the belief of a Unitarian which a Deist does not believe, except that the Scriptures are a revelation from heaven? Many Deists profess to believe in a future state, and a day of judgment, and take the very same views of the benignity of the Deity *to all the generations of men*, that Unitarians do. The only difference that I can discern is, that the Deist believes them independently of Scripture, while the Unitarian finds them to be countenanced by the Scripture.

But I may be reminded, that the person here described was not a Deist; that he was a Calvinist, and was only in danger of becoming a Deist. If his view of God coincided with our author's description, he was no Calvinist; else I am utterly ignorant of what is called Calvinism. We do not view God as clothed in vengeance, seated on a burning throne, with the other concomitants, which are too blasphemous for repetition. We view him as in Jesus Christ, seated on a throne of grace, regarding his children with the tenderest affection. We cannot, indeed, conceive of him as smiling benignantly on *all the generations of men;* for he himself tells us that he is angry with the wicked every day, and that he will come with flaming fire to take vengeance on his ene-

* P. 83, 2d Ed.

mies; and if the converted Calvinist do not now believe such declarations, he has been converted only to infidelity. "Knowing," therefore, with the Apostle, "the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

But what does our author mean by 'regeneration,' and by being 'delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God?' Does he suppose it to be, being delivered from the trammels of some popular belief? If so, he egregiously errs. To be regenerated is not, in the language of Scripture, to be changed from one doctrine to another—from Calvinism to Unitarianism, or from Unitarianism to Calvinism. Either of these changes may be made without regeneration, and without deliverance. Regeneration is being renewed in the whole man after the image of God, having the corrupt passions and affections subdued, corrupt habits broken off, and the whole soul brought into conformity to the Divine will. The glorious liberty of the children of God is not deliverance from the terror of such a spectre as the author has conjured up—it is deliverance from pride, from guilty passions, from the captivity of Satan, from the bondage of a defiled imagination, and from the trammels of the world's example and influence—it is, in short, freedom to run in the ways of God's commandments. And, if our author is in the habit of teaching his people, that they are free with the glorious liberty of the children of God, because they are not Calvinists, he deceives both himself and them. The whole passage, viewed with reference to Calvinism, is a mere parody on Scripture language.

If Unitarians would permit me, I could tell them, in a few words, the secret of the greater attention to practical religion, and the greater

zeal for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, that visibly exist among those who are really influenced by the principles usually called orthodox, than among Unitarians. The *first* reason is, that instead of viewing the Lord God as that grim tyrant which our author paints, we regard him as a God of infinite mercy, and as having rescued us from the most imminent and awful danger, by taking upon himself the satisfaction which the law of the universe, that we had violated, demanded: and further, that viewing him as manifested in Christ Jesus, we see in him a character altogether lovely, infinitely deserving of our love and imitation. The *second* reason is, that we do not lower the standard of duty. We believe that God requires of us perfect conformity to the standard of his law, as explained, in all its extent and spirituality, by the Lord Jesus; and that, although, when we repent of our sin, and turn from it, he is graciously pleased to pardon it through Jesus Christ; yet, that he is always displeased with sin, that he abhors it, and that therefore we are bound, by every tie of gratitude and of duty, to aim at perfection. We are thus never satisfied with ourselves, as if we had made sufficient attainments to save us from perdition; but are continually aspiring after higher attainments; and thus, by aiming higher, we rise higher,—by adopting a more perfect model to copy from, we make a more perfect picture. The *third* is, that, according to our Lord's doctrine, we have more operative motives to love and obedience, than Unitarians. We believe that more has been forgiven us than they do, and therefore we love more. We confess that we deserved nothing but expulsion from the family of God, and condemnation to die; and believing ourselves to be

pardoned by the free mercy of God, experiencing in ourselves that we are, in some degree, purified, and becoming fit for the holy and blessed society of heaven, we feel ourselves bound, by the strongest obligations, to live not for ourselves, but for him who died for us. And the *last* and most direct reason is, that, believing that the gift of the Holy Ghost is offered to us, and will be given if we ask it, we do ask, and we receive the Holy Ghost, who puts life and efficacy into all these motives to obedience, enlightens our understanding with all spiritual knowledge, and regenerates our affections; and thus makes us more holy than we, by our utmost exertions, even if, without his influences, we were disposed to put forth such exertions, could make ourselves.

4. One of the surest tests of the spirit of the world, and enmity to Christ, lurking in the heart of any man, is to be found in his contemptuous or injurious treatment of the genuine disciples of the Redeemer. There are but two parties in the world—the children of this world, and the children of light; the saints of God, and the enemies of God: and these parties have been in all ages perfectly distinct, and continue to be so till the present day. The world, almost intuitively, calls the people of God by the Scripture name, *saints*. This name is, indeed, given to them in contempt; yet it sufficiently marks the opinion of men respecting the nature of at least their outward practice, as more holy than that of the world generally.

The designation *saint*, and others of similar import, are not designations given to any particular organised body of Christians. The epithet *saint*, does not mean a Presbyterian, or Epis-

copalian, or Independent; it does not mean a Calvinist, or Arminian, or Baptist, or Methodist, or Moravian; it is neither Churchman nor Dissenter. There are persons in all these denominations, who are stigmatised as *saints;* and some who are free from that reproach. The characteristics of a *saint* are entirely personal. The leading features of his character are these—he will not violate the Sabbath, nor frequent places of public amusement, particularly such as the theatre—he is guarded in his language, carefully avoiding all expressions even tending to profanity, or deviating from strict truth—he is punctual and regular in his attendance on public worship—he takes an interest in all measures for extending the knowledge and practice of religion, whether by the circulation of the Scriptures, or the preaching of the Gospel, or the promotion of religious education; and, as he has opportunity, contributes by his property, or his exertions, or both, to the advancement of such measures—he worships God in his family, with reading the Scriptures and prayer. These are the leading characteristics—the family features of the *saints.* I omit mentioning the ordinary duties of honesty, industry, sobriety, liberality to the poor &c.; not because I suppose that any one bearing the character of a *saint,* can be destitute of these virtues; but merely because I suppose him to possess these only in common with others, who are not saints. His distinguishing characteristics thus refer chiefly to those duties which have God himself for their direct object.

Let any man, bearing in his ordinary intercourse with the world a fair upright character, conduct himself in the manner which I have just described, and he will acquire the character

of a saint: let him conduct himself otherwise—devoting the Sabbath or any part of it to business or amusement, attending the theatre, neglecting occasionally public worship on the Lord's day, neglecting the worship of God in his family, and, however upright and reputable he may be, the world will say, perhaps intending to commend him, that he is *no saint.*

It is not to be supposed that all who have the character of saints among men, are really saints in the sight of God. There may be, and I doubt not, there are some, perhaps many, who seek to obtain the reputation of being saints for sinister purposes; and whose sanctified demeanour is mere hypocrisy. Still, the conduct which I have described as characteristic of the saints, being that which the Bible would lead us to expect in those who are really saints, it is manifest that the genuine people of God are to be found among those whom the world stigmatizes and despises as *saints.* Nothing can be more obvious than that if our Lord were uow in Britain or Ireland, acting as he did in Judea, he would rank among the *saints.* He went about preaching in the open air, or in synagogues, as he had opportunity; he spent whole nights in prayer; he attended no places of amusement; he was careful, although not superstitious, in his observance of the Sabbath; he was incessant and faithful in reprehending vice of every description, and in warning the rich of the danger to which their riches exposed them; in short, he had, in the highest degree, those very characterestics which would, in the present day, have infallibly procured for him the contemptuous epithet of *saint.*

People of the world, for the purpose of avoiding the obvious inference, that, if the *saints* re-

semble the Redeemer in their character, they themselves are altogether of another spirit from him,—seek to support their hopes by pronouncing those whom they call saints to be hypocrites. And, if they can discover any of them belying their character, by any open or secret wickedness, they are right in branding them as hypocrites. But if they call any of them hypocrites, without evidence of any such misconduct, but merely on account of their more exact attention to religious duties, it is very obvious that, for the very same reason, they would have pronounced our Lord himself, had they witnessed his manner of life, to be a hypocrite. The blessed Jesus would, according to that rule, have been a very ring-leader of hypocritical saints.

Some who are more learned in the Scriptures would represent the saints as corresponding to the Pharisees. The characteristics of the Pharisees were, that, while they made long prayers, they devoured widows houses; that, while they paid tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin, they neglected the weightier matters of the law; and that they substituted the commandments of men for the ordinances of God. Now, if the world can discover any man who has the reputation of being a saint, devouring widows' houses, neglecting the weightier matters of the law, and making void the law of God by their traditions, they are quite welcome to call him a Pharisee. But let not that man be called a Pharisee who resembles the Pharisees, only in that which was good in them; but who perpetrates none of their wickedness. For, if it were considered a sufficient ground to condemn a man as a Pharisee, that he is as exact as they were in religious observances, while he cannot be accused of any of their rapacity and

injustice, or of any of their presumptuous additions to the ordinances of the Gospel, our Lord himself would not escape the charge of being a Pharisee.

But Jesus and his disciples stood forth perfectly distinct from the speculating, philosophizing Sadducees, who rejected all mysteries, on the one hand; and from the rapacious, sanctimonious, superstitious Pharisees, on the other. And the saints of God, at the present day, stand forward equally distinguished, on the one side, from philosophizing Christians, who must bring every doctrine of revelation to the bar of their judgment, and reject whatever seems to imply difficulties and apparent contradictions which they cannot solve or reconcile; and, on the other, from those who convert religion into a routine of ceremonies and superstitious observances of their own invention, and who, under a sanctified demeanour, cloak the most unjust and rapacious practices. The Gospel of Jesus is even now, as it was in the days of the apostle, a stumbling block to the superstitious Jew, and foolishness to the philosophical Greek; but to those who are saved—those who are "called to be saints" and, "who call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord," it is "the power of God and the wisdom of God."*

The treatment which the saints receive from the world is that which our Lord taught his people to expect, and which he himself received. They are spoken of by the world, sometimes with contempt, and sometimes with hatred. Their best actions are ascribed, without a shadow of proof, to hypocrisy. If any one who has obtained the character of a saint, although it

* See 1 Cor. i. throughout.

might be by hypocrisy, fall into any open sin, the world rejoices, and sets him forth as a specimen of the character of all the saints, as if they were all equally hypocritical. No other class of persons is thus treated. Our author labours to prove that Unitarians are persecuted. But the utmost that he can bring forward in a tangible shape, is that they are treated with certain discourtesies by other professing Christians, that they are subjected to the Test and Corporation Acts, and that their religion is branded with the names of leprosy, infidelity, deism, and enmity to God. With regard to discourtesies, I do confess that Unitarians have had just cause of complaint from those who are esteemed, and many of whom I trust really are, saints. Instead of a disposition to go hand in hand with them in every duty, as far as no compromise of principle is implied, there has been certainly a disposition, which I conceive to be as unwise as it is unscriptural, to stand aloof from them, to partition them off, and to leave them by themselves;—but all this is very different from ascribing to them hypocrisy and secret immoralities. I believe that justice is uniformly done to their character, both by the world and by the saints. With regard to the Test and Corporation Acts, they stand on a footing of equality with all other dissenters from the Establishment; and with regard to the names leprosy, infidelity, &c. being given to their religious system, although railing accusations are decidedly hostile to the spirit of the Gospel; yet we *must* form a judgment of the nature and tendency of their doctrine, as they do of ours: and surely there is no greater want of charity in our expressing our belief that their system tends to infidelity, and that, as being not the Gospel, but a substitute for it, it does not

deliver them from the natural enmity of the carnal heart to God, and does not set them free, as the Gospel would, from sin and its consequences, than in their expressing their belief that our religion tends to Tritheism and idolatry. But still, all this is very different from the treatment that Jesus and his apostles received, and which the saints still receive. Jesus was charged with sedition and blasphemy, and these are charges which are yet constantly brought against his true disciples. They are assailed in their moral character. In the first ages of the Church they were charged with cannibalism and the most abandoned profligacy; and they are still called hypocrites—represented as putting on a sanctimonious demeanour, to cloak private wickedness. If one, who like Judas Iscariot, has insinuated himself among them, manifests his real character by some scandalous wickedness, his misconduct is represented as betraying the genuine character of the whole body. Our author hints at the marriage of a certain missionary to a lady of rank, as if some artifice had been practised on his part "to lead her captive;" when not calumny itself ever breathed any suspicion against him: that calumny which, in this hostile world they could not escape, having vented its malignity only against the equally unoffending female.* After this gratuitous assault on private character, our author, in the genuine style of the world, generalizes the accusation by the epithet, "*Jesuitical Saints.*" He further applies the words of St. Paul to himself and his Unitarian brethren—"persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed."† This is another parody on the word of God. If the author had experienced for but twenty-four hours, a treatment such

* Page 92. Ed. 2. † Page 89. Edit. 2.

as that which the apostle alludes to in these words, he would scarcely have ventured to apply them to the very comfortable and respectable congregation in which he ministers. "Even," says the apostle, "to this very hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labour, working with our own hands, being reviled we bless, being defamed we entreat, we are made as the filth of the earth, the offscouring of all things unto this day," He may indeed, as he complains, be "driven from courts;" but he "finds an asylum" from persecution, in the freedom of his country, if not "in heaven."

No ingenuity can identify Unitarians with those who are described in the New Testament as the saints, who 'called upon the name of the Lord Jesus.' The very epithet *saint* is abjured by them, and associated with Jesuitry and hypocrisy. And this is of itself, a very significant indication, that they take their station with the world and not with Christ. Our blessed Lord has left his disciples in the world as his representatives; and they who love the master will love the servant for the master's sake. Those who love the devotion, the holiness of life, the diligence in disseminating the Gospel, in preaching particularly to the poor, will love those who in any degree resemble him. We have shown that these are the persons who till this hour are called *saints;* for that Jesus himself were he now visibly with us, would undoubtedly come under that despised appellation. But Unitarians are uniformly in opposition to the saints—I do not believe that one single individual of them bears, in the eye of the world, the character of a saint; but always that of the men of this world.

And their spirit may be more allied to a spirit even of deadly persecution than they themselves are aware of. The apostle Paul, alluding to the conduct of Ishmael towards Isaac, says, "as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now."* Ishmael had merely mocked Isaac; but the apostle saw, in that mockery, the same spirit which was urging unbelievers to defame, and buffet, and murder the saints. Jesus said to his disciples, "men will revile you, and" then "persecute you;" and, being prevented from persecuting you, "they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake."†

In these countries, we have reason to bless the God of Providence, that no sect or party is permitted to persecute, to any very great extent, the saints of God. But let us look to the continent of Europe, where Unitarians have power in their hands, and what spirit do they manifest? They first attempted to impose silence upon the saints, in regard to the peculiarities of their doctrine; but, finding that they were not obeyed, they then proceeded to most violent, murderous persecution. Ministers have, not merely been disannexed from their charges, but separated from their families, banished from their country, immured in dungeons, and some have received their crown of martyrdom through the instrumentality of these rational Christians.

And how does our author look on these scenes of horror of which he cannot be ignorant, intimately acquainted as he proves himself to be with the Unitarian hallelujahs which he says are re-echoing through the vallies of Switzerland. We might reasonably have expected that some ex-

* Gal. iv. 29. † Matt. v. 11.

pression of indignation would have burst from him, in hearing of such atrocious deeds being perpetrated under the name of religion; and that, when he exulted in the hallelujahs of his Unitarian brethren, he would have expressed some distaste for the infernal yells with which they followed their victims. But, no; instead of seeking to call off these bloodhounds, he whoops and halloos to them, by denouncing the objects of their fury as fanatics. What had Malan, the amiable, the pious Malan done, that his sufferings should excite no commiseration? He is a Trinitarian—he is endeavouring to re-introduce those doctrines into the church of Geneva, which he conceived to be necessary to its spiritual life;—and that is enough. Our author tells us that "Malan and his *fanatics* are howling a funeral dirge over the lifeless carcass of Calvinism."

The lifeless carcass of Calvinism! And how came it to be a lifeless carcass? Was it by the bold open assault of Unitarians, wielding the sword of the Spirit? No, but by a practice which our author ascribes to Unitarians from the very earliest ages of their history—signing creeds which they do not believe. The church of Geneva was defended from the intrusion of Unitarians by one of the most precise and determinate Calvinistic creeds in Christendom;—a frail defence, indeed, against those who have not honesty enough to be restrained by the solemnity of an oath; yet sufficient to prove, that any Unitarians who were found in it, entered not by the door into the sheepfold, but came in some other way. They thus crept into the church of Geneva. Under the cloak of the Trinitarian creed, they disseminated their Unitarian doctrine; till, as our author informs us, they converted that church into a lifeless carcass. By

and by, finding themselves strong, they privately made such alterations in the formularies of the church, as left room for the open admission of Unitarians; and having thus, from being a lifeless carcass of Calvinism, started into life as a Unitarian living body, what are they doing? —Persecuting the saints of God.

The measure of expressing an acquiescence in Trinitarian creeds, for the purpose of obtaining or securing places of emolument, is, according to our author's own statement, as we have just observed, of very old standing—quite, it should seem, an established and recognised practice among Unitarians. He tells us that "the Fathers of the three first centuries, and consequently all the ancient Christian people for 300 years P. C., till the Council of Nice, were generally Unitarians;—that at length came the struggle between Arius and Athanasius, the one loaded with every epithet of abuse which an intolerant and triumphant faction could invent; the other a falsifier, a forger, and *the author* of a new system of divinity, whose language, at least, and practices, if not notions, were certainly unknown to the earlier ages of Christianity; that, after various successes on both sides, the latter gained the ascendancy; and the tre mendous doctrine became firmly established by law." This is the theory by which our author accounts for the historical fact—that the whole, or at least a very large majority of the clergy who composed the Council of Nice, and who were collected from all parts of the Roman empire, declared, not only that the doctrine of the Trinity was the doctrine which they held, but that it had been the doctrine of the Church from the days of the Apostles. Although they were Unitarians at heart, they were induced by the hard words of Athanasius, and the dread of persecution, to become

Trinitarians, and to give their testimony to what they knew to be a falsehood; and what is still more extraordinary, their people, who had no such motives, generally followed their example. This story, if true, would furnish one of the most awful instances of moral delinquency that has ever been exhibited; but happily for the character of the early Christians, it is utterly incredible, and ut terly destitute of foundation in history. It marks, however, how easily our author supposes that a whole body of Unitarians could, for the purpose of avoiding persecution, and retaining their emoluments, be prevailed upon to acquiesce in a Trinitarian creed.

If Unitarianism be spreading in the Presbyterian Church in America, it is by means of the same nefarious practice; for that church strictly requires the signature of a Trinitarian creed. I believe, however, that the very contrary is the fact. It was never able to make way among the Presbyterians. It had begun to advance among the Independents; but is now retrograding; and a son of the late Doctor Dwight, is now minister of a congregation which formerly was Unitarian; not by signifying his acquiescence in a Unitarian creed, but by the open, public avowal of Trinitarian doctrine.

That there are four Unitarian congregations among the wealthier inhabitants of Boston may be very true; and yet, there may be very few Unitarians there. I fully agree with our author, however, that numbers are no test of truth. I have no greater faith in the infallibility of the people, than in the infallibility of the Pope. But as he seems, I think somewhat inconsistently, to make a triumphant display of the extension of Unitarianism, as if that tended to corroborate its truth, I have felt it to be necessary to counteract any such effect, by an appeal to facts.

It is far from being my intention to charge any man, either with persecution, or with signing a creed which he does not believe, who is not personally guilty of either. But the latter practice is notoriously general among Unitarians in all countries, and, if we could believe our author's representations, in all ages. It was by this practice that the Church of England was at one time nearly overrun with Arianism; that Arianism had made large inroads on the Church of Scotland, and on the Synod of Ulster; and that Unitarianism has converted Protestantism, on the Continent of Europe, into a lifeless carcass of religion. In regard to the former practice, namely, persecution, Unitarians have always taken side with the world. When the world has reviled the saints, they have joined in the outcry: when it has persecuted the saints, they, like the Sadducees, have attempted to bear them down by their ensnaring questions, by denouncing them as fanatics, and by joining forces with the persecuting party; and when the world has spoken evil of them falsely, they have given currency to the slanders, and have branded the whole body as Jesuitical or hypocritical. In no instance, that I am acquainted with, have they publicly and openly espoused the cause of the saints. They have been as uniformly opposed to them as the Sadducees were to Jesus and his Apostles; and they have thereby proved, that they are still of this world.

6. I have yet to observe, that Unitarianism tends to lead onward to infidelity. This has been noticed and proved by Fuller, with his usual acuteness; and I have only to add to his observations what may be suggested by the work

which gave occasion to these inquiries, and also by that of the Rev. Doctor Bruce.

Our author represents Unitarianism as a refuge for those who would otherwise be infidels. And that there may be persons who prefer Unitarianism to infidelity, I doubt not. Some may have got rid of every thing that was distasteful to them in Christianity, by becoming Unitarians; and have no further motive to fly in the face of the general belief of the country. Others may find Unitarianism a name under which they may hold any opinions they choose, short of an avowed rejection of the Scriptures. If it ranges from high Arianism, to the Neonomianism of the Continent, it leaves ample scope for diversity of sentiment, even on subjects that our author himself would admit to be essential. On the one side, our author must appear little short of profane to his friend Doctor Bruce, on account of his 'being at variance with both revelations, and fencing with the word of God;' while, on the other, he would be regarded by his brethren on the Continent, as bordering on fanaticism, in consequence of his treating the miracles of our Lord, and his ascension to heaven, as implying a manifestation of supernatural agency. A person of a speculative mind, therefore, who wishes to be bound by no fixed principles, may have many inducements to become a Unitarian; for, by that system he is at liberty to bend the Scripture to whatever notions may appear to him to be consistent with reason and common sense.

But the system leads directly to infidelity. It admits principles of criticism which imply a virtual rejection of the divine inspiration of Scripture. We have already proved this fact by reference to these principles; but it can be proved also by reference to history. When Unitarian-

ism (using the word in the wide sense adopted by our author) was introduced or commended to the British churches by Doctor Samuel Clarke, it was with extreme caution. Every thing was said of the glory and majesty of the Saviour, consistent with his being inferior to Almighty God. He was, not merely an angel, but a super-angelical spirit, of all but infinite perfections; and he was an object of worship, in a certain sense divine; in short he was every thing but the true God. But he was not a manifestation of God;—he was another being;—disguise the matter as they might, he was a mere creature; and therefore it became necessary that every text in Scripture which represented him as God, should be silenced or diverted to another meaning. And from the moment that this process commenced, a door was opened wide enough to admit the comments of the lowest grade of Socinianism.

Matters did not long remain on this footing. The able metaphysician who broached the system, had done his part, and had added to his system the reputation of his own profound reverence for the person of the Saviour. Succeeding Arians, however, took greater liberties with the Saviour's person. He was no longer a super-angelic being, whose nature was involved in impenetrable mystery; but simply some good angel, who had, in the course of ages, made great improvement in virtue. They thus did their work. Then came a new race who, carrying forward the same process, began to look with approbation, to the Socinians of the Continent, at whose system Doctor Clarke and his immediate adherents would have shuddered; and who had yet scarcely obtained a footing in England. The learning, and talent, and candour, &c. &c. &c., of these Continental Socinians, be-

came the subjects of high eulogy; and our colleges and other seminaries of learning, began to indicate the advancement of the opinion, that Jesus was a mere man. Still, however, something was supposed to be mysterious about his person; he was imagined to be a man, not born in the ordinary way of humanity, but having a body and soul miraculously formed for him by the Spirit of God. The churches having been pretty copiously supplied with students entertaining these sentiments, a new race sprang up, still advancing in the same direction, who became impatient of the mysterious formation of our Lord's body, and conceived it would simplify the Gospel very much to suppose him to be a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary. The Scripture was examined anew, and it was found that by a very little further stretching, this mystery also might be thrust out. Still, however, the most profound respect was expressed for the divine authority and inspiration of Scripture, and for the character of the blessed Jesus. But in the progress of this new liberty, (as was to be expected) even the mystery of the inspiration of Scripture, and of the sinless character of Jesus, was felt to be too great a confinement for that freedom of thought which was now regarded as the 'glorious liberty of the children of God.' Modern English Socinians have, therefore, emancipated themselves from these trammels also. Doctor Priestley says, that he does not consider the books of Scripture as *inspired*, but merely as authentic records of the dispensations of God. He professes to believe all the writers, without exception, to have been of the greatest probity, and to have been well informed of every thing of consequence of which they treat; but that, at the same time, he believes them to have been

men, and consequently *fallible*, and liable to mistake, with respect to things to which they had not given much attention, or concerning which *they had not the means of exact information.* And he is much applauded by some Unitarians for *magnanimity*, in pronouncing the Mosaic history of the fall of man, to be but '*a lame account.*' And with regard to the character of Jesus, he expresses his belief that he too was fallible; and even endeavours to discover upon him some shade, at least, of sin. Still, however, all this is said amidst expressions, (which may deceive those who wish to be deceived,) of profound respect for the authority of Scripture, and for the character of Jesus. The descent into the shades of death, does not stop even here. The Unitarians on the Continent, in whose progress our author exults, have got rid of all *superstitious* reverence for the sacredness of Scripture, and for the character of Jesus. Moses is pronounced to be a demagogue, who took advantage of some peculiar tide in the Red Sea, and of some volcanic eruption, to deceive the people. Jesus is represented as a sort of benevolent enthusiast, who sacrificed his life in a scheme to promote virtue. Professors of theology write books attempting to account for every thing recorded in the New Testament, without the interposition of any miraculous power, and consequently without implying any testimony from God. The Unitarianism of the Continent can scarcely be said to be infidelity disguised. It is infidelity, broadly, openly avowed, under the mere name of a Christianity which does not necessarily imply the belief even that such a person as Jesus Christ ever existed.

In short, I cannot but regard the first step that is taken in the direction of Unitarianism,

as a step towards infidelity; 'for her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.' And, without one unkind or disrespectful feeling towards those who may have commenced such a career, I would intreat them to look behind and before them; to seek for some distinct view of the direction in which they are advancing, before they determine to proceed farther; and to take warning from the multitudes who, by following out the same course of speculation, have thrown off every vestige of Christianity.

Ireland has not yet made the same advancement in this new *light* and *liberty*, with the Continent of Europe, or even with England. She is behind England, perhaps twenty or thirty years, and behind the Continent, full half a century. But the downward course of the system is as apparent in Ireland as it is elsewhere. We have a considerable remnant of Arianism, which has almost disappeared in England, still remaining. Most of the older rational Christians, as they wish to be denominated, are Arians; although scarcely so high Arians as Dr. Clarke and his immediate adherents; but the younger men indicate a distinct advance towards Socinianism. This progress in the mind of our author, is indicated by his taking no account, in his system, of the difference between Arianism and English Unitarianism; and by his bringing his authorities, not from the older Arian, but from the more modern Socinian writers.

The tendency of the whole system, stretching from high Arianism down to the lowest grade of Socinianism, towards infidelity, is sufficiently manifest in the writings both of our author and of Dr. Bruce. With regard to our author, he could scarcely have mentioned Dr. Priestley—a writer who, in express terms, denies the inspiration of Scrip-

ture—with such unbounded approbation as he does, and without putting his readers on their guard against the poison of his works, if his own impressions of the sacredness and authority of the Bible had been very deep and influential. The supposition also which he makes, that Jeremiah and John might, in their writings, contradict our blessed Lord, and his declaration that he would deem his words recorded by Mark, more worthy of credit than theirs, is another indication that he has no just conception of what is meant by a writing coming to us stamped with the authority, and containing the testimony of Almighty God. The tendency of our author's views, however, has been already laid sufficiently open to the reader.

But let us turn for a moment to Dr. Bruce, who occupies a higher station on the graduated scale of Unitarianism. This is the more necessary, in consequence of the charge which that gentleman brings against Socinians of 'fencing with the word of God, and parrying and warding off its most direct and pointed texts.' One might expect, from such a charge, that he himself would treat the Scripture more respectfully; but, on the contrary, his treatment of the word of God seems to me still more presumptuous than that of those whom he condemns. He has not indeed so much fencing with particular texts; but this he avoids merely by reducing the authority of the whole, and representing whole sections of the Bible as not worth fencing with.

Some of his directions for studying the word of God are as follow. He attempts to establish the principle, that every thing necessary to salvation must be recorded by the evangelists; because it would be highly disrespectful to them

to suppose, that, while they recorded so many incidents in the life of Christ, and so many subordinate points in his discourses, they omitted any material principle of Gospel truth. But may not the same supposition be made respecting any other book in the New Testament? No! says this author, because the evangelists professed to write an account of Christ's life and doctrine, and therefore must have included every thing essential that he did or said: and because Jesus must have been made perfectly acquainted by his Father with the whole Gospel. "It is," says he, "a strange imagination that our Saviour should leave this world as he found it, ignorant of those essential principles without which they could not be saved." But all this is as applicable to the Mosaic writings as to the Gospels. How triumphantly could this be replied to by a Jew? "You say I must believe the Gospels, else I cannot be saved. But it is a strange imagination that God should make a glorious manifestation of himself, and instruct his servant Moses to write his will to men, and yet should leave the world as he found it, ignorant of those truths without which they could not be saved." And the Jew might, in his turn, be answered by an Ishmaelite. "You tell us that we must believe the writings of Moses, else we cannot be saved; but it is a strange imagination that our father Abraham, who was called the friend of God, should be left ignorant of any thing that was necessary to salvation." Does Dr. Bruce reply that the Ishmaelites and the Jews were acquainted with every thing that was necessary for the salvation of men in their day; but that, when more information was given, more knowledge was requisite? This is precisely what we hold respecting the Gospels. They contained, up till

the time of Jesus, the last revelation of God, and therefore, *with the preceding revelations*, contained all that was then necessary to be known: but they did nothing towards lessening the importance of any subsequent revelation. Peter, for example, was declared by our Lord himself to be blessed, and to be under the teaching of God, although almost immediately afterwards he said to Jesus, relative to his submitting to suffering and death, "that be far from thee Lord." Yet the apostle Paul, afterwards says, "other foundation can no man lay than Jesus Christ and *him crucified.*"

Besides, Jesus himself intimates that further revelations were to be given by the Holy Ghost after his departure; and, notwithstanding this author's notion that the Holy Ghost was inferior to Jesus, his communications must be of equal authority, because they come stamped with that of Jesus himself. What does Doctor Bruce reply to this? To a man of less hardihood this would surely be decisive? But he, still undaunted, limits the commission given to the Holy Ghost to minute matters respecting the pastoral office, and the government of churches; and fairly sets aside the authority of all the subsequent writings of Scripture, except so far as they treat of the conduct of congregations, the qualifications of ecclesiastical persons, &c.* But some of the epistles say little or nothing respecting these subjects which Dr. Bruce has prescribed as the sole matters for which they are to be referred to. What is to be done with these? "It is not meant," he says, "that both divisions of the sacred volume" [i.e. the Gospels as the one, and the Acts and Epistles as the other] "may not be often applied to on

* Dr. Bruce's Sermons, page 44—49.

the same subject; for you will find doctrinal points and moral duties illustrated in both. But you are never to set up the authority of the disciples against that of the Master; nor consider their writings as the primary source of knowledge on doctrinal questions, as is too often done."* The meaning of which obviously is, that we are to suspend our belief of any doctrinal instruction in the Acts or Epistles, till we have ascertained that the same instruction is to be found in the Gospels; and if we do not find it there, we are to pay no attention to it; because that division of Scripture is never to be treated as a primary source of knowledge on doctrinal subjects. Thus this learned gentleman instructs his hearers and his readers to reduce a large portion of the New Testament to absolute insignificance. It is not to be wondered at, that he did not deem it worthy of his attention to fence with its most pointed texts.

But will Dr. Bruce abide by whatever is contained in the Gospels? No, by no means. The same principle which determines that every thing essential must be contained in the Gospels, determines that every thing essential must be contained in each of the Gospels. This is not my inference but his own,

"Hence," says he, "we may deduce not only the sufficiency of Scripture in general, but also the sufficiency of every evangelist separately, as to fundamentals; for if any one of them were deficient in this respect, he would be exposed to all these imputations. From this another undeniable inference follows; that no principle, which cannot be directly proved from *every one* of the evangelists, can be an essential article of faith; for, otherwise, we must

* Dr. Bruce's Sermons, p. 50.

suppose, that some one of them has omitted an essential truth. If then, you be in doubt, whether any doctrine be necessary to salvation try it by this test: look for it in the Gospels; and if you do not find it plainly declared *in them all*, you may safely conclude, that it is not essential to the plan of redemption. If any person attempt to impose *a spurious tenet* upon you; require him to prove it in this manner. If he fail, you may be assured, that the point in question is not *even an important truth.* This I recommend as a sure guide to conduct you through the intricacies of controversy, and prevent you from being entangled in the nets of sophistry"!!*

This ingenious device confines every thing necessary to be known and attended to within most convenient bounds. John, for example, chiefly occupies his history with what the other evangelists had omitted. They detail more at large what occurred in Galilee; while he supplies many of the transactions which took place at Jerusalem. Now, by our author's rule, nearly all that occurred or that was said in Galilee becomes non-essential or spurious because it is not recorded by John; while a large portion of what occurred in Jerusalem, especially every intimation given by our Lord himself, in by far the largest portion of his discourses, becomes also non-essential or spurious, because they are omitted by the three other evangelists. What then becomes of our Lord's declaration, recorded by Mark only, on which Dr. Drummond builds so much, that the Son of Man, in some sense, knoweth not of the day of Judgment? It is swept away as spurious or non-essential.

The fundamentals of religion—all that is necessary for salvation being brought into this

* Dr. Bruce's Sermons, p. 45.

compendious form, the reader may suppose that Dr. Bruce will surely insist upon the most diligent attention, and the most implicit belief and obedience being given to the Gospel thus abridged. In this however he would be very much deceived. There are other considerations to be attended to. There would still remain in the Gospels, so filtered, some doctrines which are disputed. With regard to these, he says, "perhaps the shortest answer that can be given is, 'Let them alone." Thus every intimation of God to man is placed at the mercy of any captious, cavilling, sophist, who may choose to dispute it—for as soon as it is disputed, it is to be let alone. One should imagine that this were enough, but, to make security doubly sure, he gives another rule, namely, that as some supernatural truths "are merely speculative, and others are calculated to influence our practice, it is evident, that these last are the truths, which are said to belong to us, and to our children." Thus again, whatever a man may imagine is not calculated to influence his practice, he is taught to regard as not belonging to him or his children.—There is much more to the same purpose but which I forbear to transcribe.

I put it to any reader of common sense whether it be possible, that a man who writes thus respecting the Scripture, can believe in its divine inspiration The New Testament is divided into two sections, and the authority of the one weighed against that of the other. Apostles are supposed to contradict their Master and one another; although they all spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The fulness of the Gospels respecting every thing essential is argued, not from the inspiration of

the evangelists, but from their own private character. The God of heaven breaks silence to communicate to us certain information; and this author sets himself to subject the attention which we are to give to that information to certain rules of his own devising; nay, and when any fellow mortal may have disputed the meaning of any part of the communication, he fearlessly encourages men to pay no attention to it. A rule is contrived by which little or no regard is to be paid to any communication from the Deity, unless it be repeated four times; and even when it is repeated four times, if we cannot discern its practical tendency, we are to treat it as a matter *that does not belong to us.*

Is not this the very spirit of infidelity? I know nothing similar to it, in all the theological writings with which I am acquainted, but the quotations made by Pascal in his Provincial Letters, from the writings of Jesuits, in which these learned and laborious *divines* apply themselves to solve this problem, "What is the smallest possible quantum of religion that will be barely sufficient to keep a man out of hell." It is not my intention to insinuate that either of the two writers, on whom I have been animadverting, are acting under any disguise—that they know themselves to be infidels, while they profess to be Christians. It is surely not necessary to have recourse to so frightful a supposition. But it is manifest that they have no adequate conception of what it is for the God of heaven to address a communication to his creatures; nor of the attention and profound reverence to which such a communication is entitled. The manner in which they treat the word of God proves them to be absolutely blind to its supernatural glories. If God

were to address them in a voice from heaven they would not dare, as one of the gentlemen expresses himself, to fence with his words and attempt to parry his most direct and pointed declarations; neither would they dare to encourage those who heard such a voice along with them, to pay no attention to any part of his intimations. And the only excuse that can be made for the awfully presumptuous treatment of that book, all of which was dictated by the Holy Ghost, and all of which is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, in which Unitarians indulge, is, that they do not know it to be indeed a communication from the Sovereign of the universe. May the Lord Jesus pray for them—"Father forgive them, they know not what they do"!

CONCLUSION.

I would, in conclusion, intreat my Unitarian friends to consider, with deep and serious attention, what is implied in the eternal, invisible God, opening a communication with us by writing; sending to us written instructions, containing all information necessary to qualify us for serving him acceptably and enjoying his favour, and written directions for the regulation of our conduct. Surely, it is the first dictate of common sense and reason, that we receive such a communication with profound reverence and implicit credence and submission. Our whole and single aim should be to understand it, that we may believe and obey it. To lay down rules, drawn from other sources, by which we are to determine what, and what only it must contain, and then to bend its language into accordance with this previously determined import of it;—rules, by which one portion of it is declared to be of more authority than another, and by which the greater part of it is determined to be unimportant, is absolutely to withstand the authority of the Sovereign of the universe, and to attempt to limit the right which he pos-

sesses to the attention and obedience of his own creatures. Would to God that I could persuade Unitarians of their need of the influence of the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of their understandings, that they might obtain even one glimpse of the glory of God, as manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ! Would to God that I could persuade them to call upon that Saviour, as the poor blind men called, and were heard, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on us!" "Lord, that our eyes might be opened!" They would then, indeed, become children of the light; their eye would be single, and their whole body full of light. May the Lord have mercy on them, and deliver them, and make them free indeed, with the glorious liberty of his children!

To those who already believe the doctrines which I have been endeavouring to defend, I would also address a few words. If you, my brethren, have indeed, been enlightened, by the day star arising in your hearts;—by the opening of your eyes to discern the spiritual glory of the Gospel of the grace of God, the reasoning in this book is scarcely necessary, either to convince or to confirm you. The only danger to which you were exposed, was a temptation voluntarily to shut your eyes, that you might have the merit of finding your own way blindfold. But if you have been enabled to discern spiritual things with any considerable degree of clearness, you can scarcely be accessible to such a temptation; and the arguments of such writings as those, on which we have been animadverting, must appear to you like the ingenious sophistry, by which a subtile disputant would attempt to persuade an unlearned man, that every thing around him is mere imagination;—that there is no light in the sun, nor heat in fire, nor cold in ice. The grand

security that neither Unitarianism, nor any other substitute for the Gospel, can ever prevail against even the weakest among his disciples, is, that the Lord Jesus himself has opened their eyes. They can meet all cavils, with the triumphant reply of the man who was born blind, "one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

Yet take heed, my brethren, lest ye be deceived. Remember that the ultimate and only decided evidence of your being indeed the disciples of Christ is, that you keep his commandments, and walk as children of light. I do not regard holiness of heart and life as *a mere* evidence of salvation: it is rather to be regarded as salvation itself, advanced just as far as that holiness of heart and life is advanced, and no further. The pardon of sin, and justification in the sight of God, are blessings only preliminary to the perfect renewal of our nature, and of our reunion to the Lord as his children. But still, holiness of heart and life is the evidence of acceptance with God. It is the token which God gives us of his favour—the certificate of our acceptance, the pledge of his reconciliation and love, and the earnest of our inheritance. There are many who profess an orthodox creed, who are still immersed in the deepest darkness. You may be convinced of the errors of Unitarianism, and be zealous for the truth, while yet you are 'in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity.' If your religion do not deliver you from the thraldom of sin, it has done nothing for you, and is spurious. A profession of genuine Christianity, so far from tending, in any degree, to extenuate wickedness, aggravates it. I altogether abjure a sentiment expressed by some, that Unitarianism,

or any other error, renders a man more hateful to God than the most profligate wickedness. I believe that the only reason why any man can appear hateful in the sight of God is his sin. Error in doctrine may, indeed, be as fatal as the grossest wickedness; because it may be the means of excluding the Gospel, by which alone the sinner can be delivered from sin, and its consequences. And if the error include a wilful rejection of the Saviour, resulting from a love of darkness rather than light, it involves in it a most determined rebellion against God;—not however, more determined than the known transgression of any of his commands. And it is the sin—the rebellion, the resistance of the authority of God, that is the efficient cause of the sinner's destruction:—his ignorance is, only in a negative sense, the cause of it. Take heed, therefore, to yourselves; flee from sin as that abominable thing which God hates, and on account of which, his wrath will be poured out on the wicked; and flee to the Lord Jesus, the Saviour, for refuge. There, and there only, you can be safe.

Finally, beware of a Pharisaical spirit—a disposition to say to your neighbour, 'stand aside, for I am holier than thou.' While we ought to to be on our guard against any approach to a compromise of principle, we ought to manifest a kind and friendly disposition towards all men—a disposition to unite with them in every good work, in so far as it is possible without actually assenting to error, or assisting in the dissemination of it. I am persuaded that Christians would promote the glory of their God and Father among all who know him not, by regarding gainsayers with less of hostility, and more of tenderness and com-

passion than they usually exhibit. To fight an opponent is very different from seeking, in the spirit of love and meekness, to lead him to the Saviour.

May the Lord command his blessing on these endeavours to rescue the communication of his will from misinterpretation; may He pardon and counteract whatever may have been said amiss; may He send forth his Spirit to open the eyes of men that they may behold the glories of the Saviour, and to call multitudes out of darkness into his marvellous light, till the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord;—and to His great name be glory for ever and ever! Amen, and amen!

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